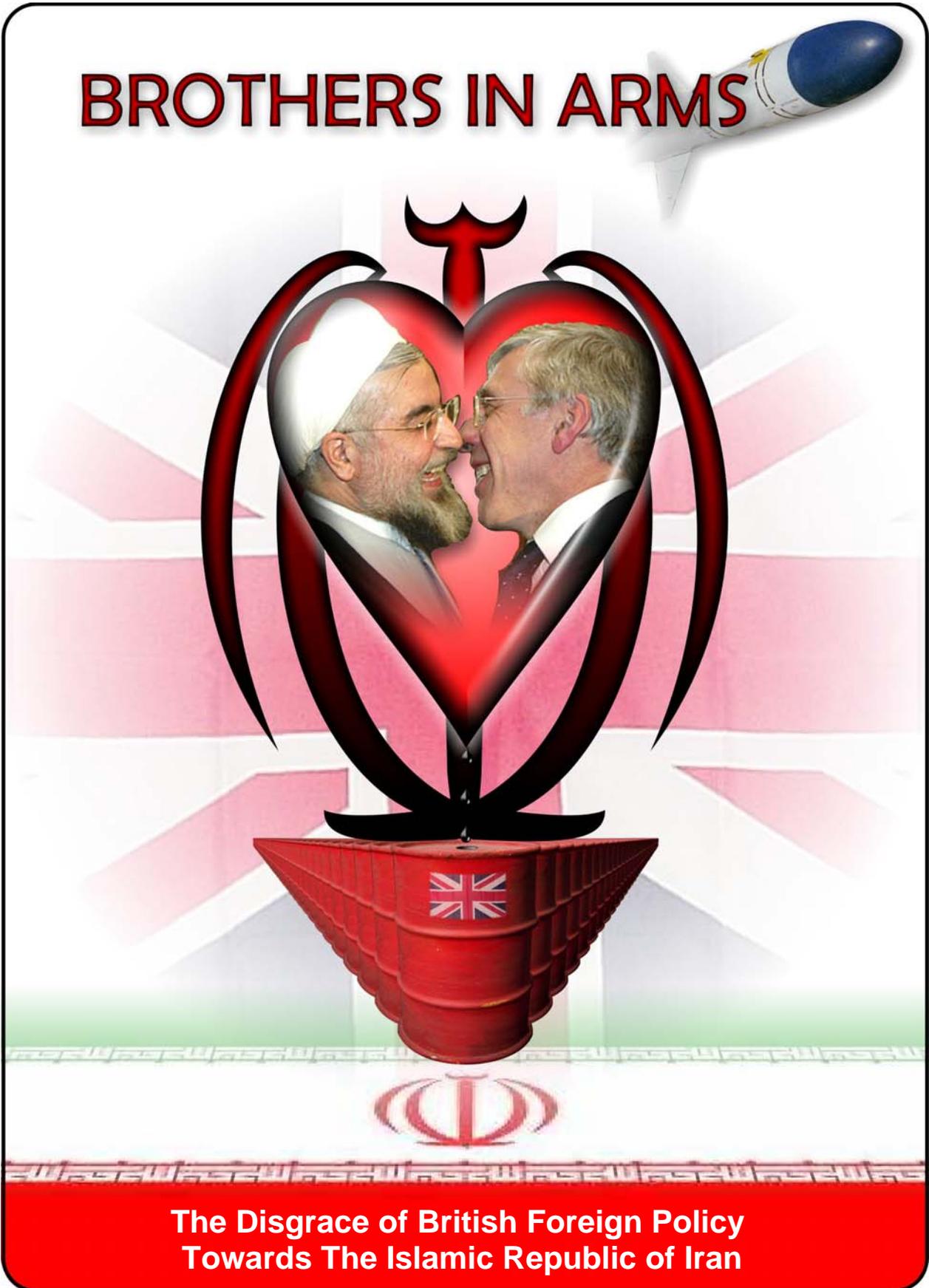


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BROTHERS IN ARMS



**The Disgrace of British Foreign Policy
Towards The Islamic Republic of Iran**

**An Evidence-based Review of British Government Support
for the Illegitimate and Inhumane Regime of Iran Since 1997
To Raise Public Awareness & Instigate Constructive Foreign Policy Reform**

May 2005

Summary

The following document provides clear evidence of the inappropriateness and failure of Britain's "critical engagement" with the unelected leadership of the Islamic Republic of Iran to affect positive change for the Iranian people, and its concurrent success in providing Britain with increased and lucrative economic trade with the same corrupt leaders.

The report details the systematic worsening of human rights and freedoms of expression under the supposed "reformist" President Khatami; Iran's continued position as the #1 financier and supporter of international terrorism, most recently through its disruptive and violent activities that aim to prevent any spread of democracy and stabilization of Iraq; and the Islamic Republic's unimpeded quest for nuclear weapons.

The dossier concludes by providing examples of how British foreign policy actually *supports* the rogue regime of Iran through its political acceptance of the validity of the Islamic Republic of Iran; its increasing economic trade with the Iranian mullahcracy; and its incomplete and inaccurate reporting of events in the media that transpire in Iran (through outlets such as BBC World Service, of which the Foreign & Commonwealth Office supports financially).

Note:

Implicit within the arguments presented herein is the notion that the Iranian regime is not a democracy, but rather a theocratic government where religious leaders ultimately control everything. While some governmental leaders may be formally elected by the public, they have to be approved before-hand by the Supreme Leader or one of the many Councils, whose members are unelected religious appointees, thereby negating any concept of democratic process.

From day one, the Islamic Republic utilized force and bloodshed to maintain their power, and they govern a populace that only shortly after their inception has overwhelmingly not wanted them to remain in power. The British government's close engagement with the Islamic Republic of Iran demonstrates that it believes in the validity of the Iranian regime and is a tacit acceptance of the grotesque fashion in which they came to power. The rogue regime of Iran continues to consistently do the opposite of what its own people wish, and Britain's engagement is therefore seen as offensive and wrong by the Iranian people, who would urge Western democracies to support their desire for freedom, democracy and human rights, rather than their unelected leaders who oppose these very desires.

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Introduction

Britain is respected worldwide for its democratic laws and its freedoms of expression. Citizens of the United Kingdom are afforded individual rights to practice religion and voice their beliefs openly and without fear. It would therefore follow that Britain's foreign policy encourage and promote these same ideals in other countries throughout the world; especially those where the freedoms of religion and speech are most threatened.

Unfortunately, when it comes to dealing with the undemocratically elected rulers of the Iranian regime, instead of supporting the people of Iran in their quest for democracy and individual freedoms, the British Foreign & Commonwealth Office has established a policy of "critical engagement"¹ with the governing mullahs, sending directly the opposite message to the Iranian people. By treating the regime of Iran as a legitimate and respected member of the civilised world, the Foreign & Commonwealth Office demonstrates acceptance of the validity of a rogue regime that, as will be shown:

- (a) has persistently and increasingly abused the human rights and freedoms of the Iranian people;
- (b) continues to be the leading terrorist-supporting nation in the world; and
- (c) has repeatedly lied about its nuclear weapons capabilities to the international community

But even worse than exercising a policy of engagement with a regime that seems better suited to medieval times, British foreign policy has gone one step further; it has shown direct support for the theocratic rulers of Iran. Indeed, through its friendly political exchanges with the mullahcracy's leaders; its shockingly large and increasing bi-national economic trade with Iran; and its incomplete coverage and misreporting of events that transpire in Iran, the British political establishment makes the statement that, no matter how much the Iranian people suffer – no matter how

¹ Letter from the Foreign & Commonwealth Office dated 13 January 2004

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many are stoned, tortured, hanged, raped and falsely imprisoned by their unelected leaders – so long as Britain can profit from the mullahs, nothing needs to change.



The Outright Failure & Inappropriateness of Britain’s “Critical Engagement” with the Iranian Regime

Since 1997, when Khatami became President of Iran, the British Foreign & Commonwealth Office has adopted a policy of “critical engagement” with the Iranian authorities. This “engagement”, which is hardly critical at all, has become progressively stronger since the events of 11 September 2001.

As an interesting aside, it is fruitful to trace the origin of the phrase “critical engagement.”

“The idea of a dialogue with the mullahs that run Iran was first circulated by Hans-Dietrich Genscher, the man who served as Germany’s foreign minister in the 1980s. Genscher called his policy ‘critical dialogue’, prompting the joke that what he meant was that when the mullahs met the Europeans for a dialogue, both criticised the United States. It is also educating to review how unsuccessful, and in fact counterproductive, his policy was. The mullahs repaid Genscher by

sending a mob to burn the German embassy in Tehran during a stage-managed demonstration. Then in 1992 Tehran dispatched a hit squad to murder four exile opposition leaders in Berlin....The French also tried their version of 'dialogue critique' with the mullahs. They were rewarded with the capture of several of their citizens, and the murder of their ambassador in Beirut by terrorist gangs financed by Tehran. French Ambassador to Tehran Guy Georgy was also seized as a hostage in 1984.”²

The correct measure of a political policy's success should logically be the achievement, on some level, of the policy's overall goals. With regards to Britain's policy of "critical engagement" toward the Iranian authorities, this would presumably mean that human rights and freedom of expression should noticeably improve over time, and that when, and only when, this transpires, the bilateral relationship could be strengthened. However, the true picture of the relationship between the Foreign & Commonwealth Office and the Iranian regime strays far from this idealistic picture. Britain is already Iran's second-largest foreign trading partner, and as shall be demonstrated later in this document, has over the years actively encouraged stronger economic relationships with the Islamic Republic of Iran. Thus, Britain has been reaping the benefits of its economic relationship with the Iranian regime for years without any concrete evidence whatsoever that the same regime is making amends to its human rights and personal freedoms abuses. "Engagement" has benefited Britain's bank books, but what has the "critical" part of its policy achieved?

A letter from the Foreign & Commonwealth Office dated 13 January 2004 states:

“...we note that the overall situation has undeniably improved since President Khatami came to power in 1997.”

Perhaps our right honourable friends should review the facts before making such illusionary statements. As documented in the following pages, the opposite is the case; the so-called "reformist" President Khatami has allowed the people of Iran to

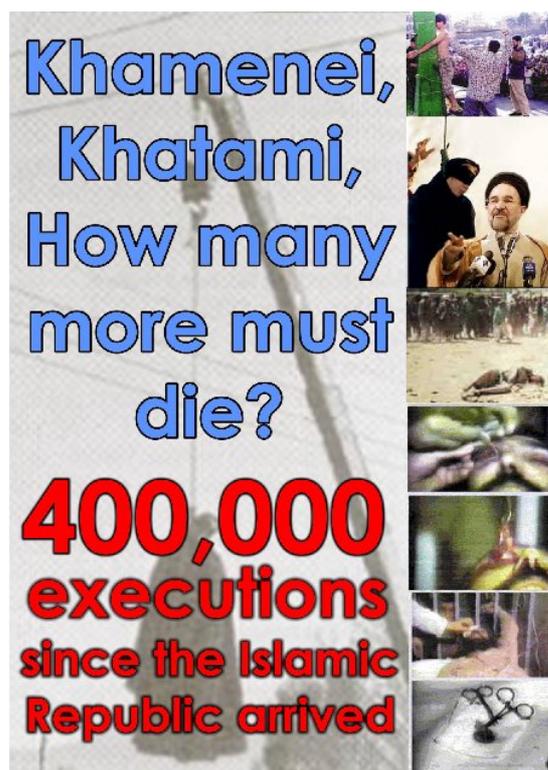
² *National Review Online*, 30 June 2003, "The British should not be appeasing the mullahs of Iran"

suffer more and more each day he has been in office, kowtowing – it would seem very willingly – to those with the real authority in Iran, without whom he cannot make any important decisions.



IRANIAN 'DEMOCRACY'

www.CoxAndForkum.com



The Illusion of Iran's Domestic "Reforms"

Rather than bringing improved freedoms to the Iranian people through President Khatami's 'reform' agenda³ when he rose to power in 1997, the Islamic Republic's record has, in fact, deteriorated markedly since this time in all arenas. The execution, torture and violence against its own citizens continues unabated, often through grotesque and medieval methods such as chain killings of political activists,

³ Excerpts from a statement by Seyyed Mohammad Khatami, President of the Islamic Republic of Iran and Chairman of the Eighth Session of the Islamic Summit Conference, Tehran 9 December 1997. Full text can be found at: Source: <http://www.radioislam.org/islam/english/islamwo/khatami.htm>

"We can certainly move the present as well as the future generation towards the new Islamic civilization through setting our eyes on horizons farther away, being together with understanding and helping each other as brothers. For this to become a reality, all of us must dedicate ourselves to the realization of the "Islamic civil society"...In the civil society that we espouse, which is centred around the axis of Islamic thinking and culture, however, personal or group dictatorship or even dictatorship of the majority and elimination of the minority has no place. In such a society man, due to the very attribute of being human, is venerated and revered and his rights respected. Citizens of the Islamic civil society enjoy the right to determine their own destiny, supervise the administration of affairs and hold the government accountable. The government in such a society is the servant of the people and not their master, and in every eventuality, is accountable to the people whom God has entitled to determine their own destiny. Our civil society is not a society where only Muslims are entitled to rights and are considered citizens. Rather, all individuals are entitled to rights, within the framework of the law. Defending such rights ranks among the fundamental duties of the government... Respect for human rights and compliance with their relevant norms and standards is not a posture adopted out of political expediency or conformity with others. Rather it is the natural consequence of our religious teaching and precepts."

journalists and artists; stonings of men and women; amputations and cross amputation; rape; and public hangings, some as recently as 2004.

A much abbreviated selection of examples is listed below, drawing on the often scarce public records of the atrocities perpetrated by the Islamic Republic against its own citizens:

2005

- A perfect example of the dichotomy between the illusion of what outsiders *perceive is happening* in Iran and *what actually takes place* in the Islamic Republic can be seen in the following example. During a speech President Khatami gave on 9 December 2005, the students he was speaking to were chanting “No more lies! No more lies!”⁴ over and over again – these are the very students that originally supported him as a ‘reformist’. Many outsiders perceived this event – which was well publicized in the global media – as a demonstration the Islamic Republics allowance for demonstration and freedom of speech. However, the reality is far different. *AFP* reported on 20 April 2005 that “...[the] students have been handed suspended prison terms for insulting President Mohammad Khatami and acting against Iran’s national security, a leading reformist student union member said yesterday. ‘Four students from Sistan-Baluchistan (in southeast Iran) received suspended prison terms of a year each,’ said Abdollah Momeni, head of the Office of Consolidating Unity (OCU), said. ‘Another four students from Tabriz Sahand University (northwest Iran) received a collective suspended prison term of 99 months and are barred from studying for a year,’ said Momeni. He did not give details on the charges.”⁵ Who knows when or if they will return safely to their families given the atrocities that take place in the Islamic Republics jails.
- Two men were sentenced for public hanging in Iran on 10 January 2005.⁶

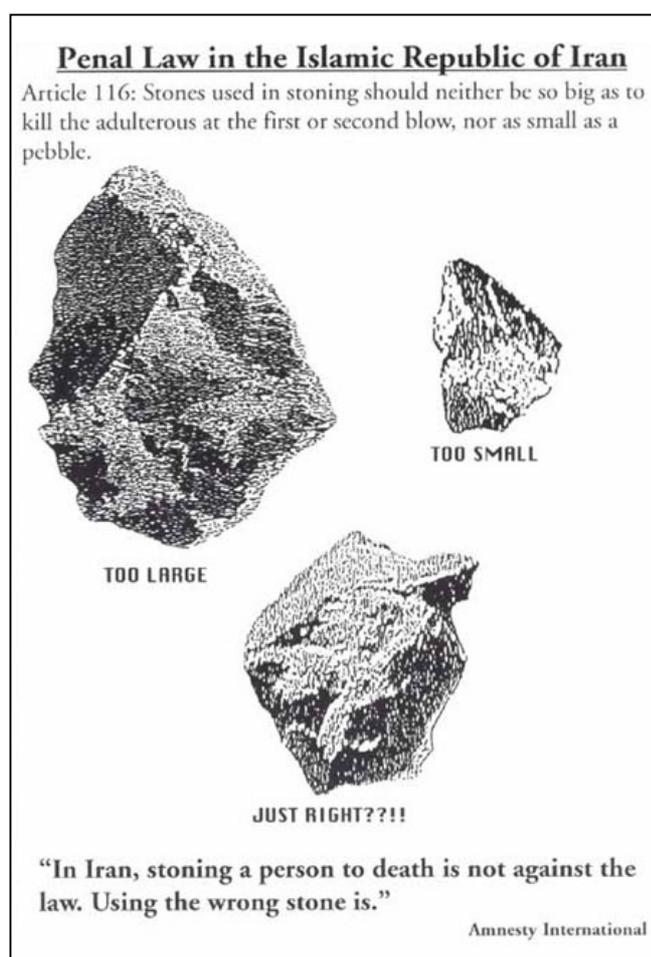
⁴ <http://memri.org/bin/articles.cgi?Page=countries&Area=iran&ID=SP82504>

⁵

http://www.thepeninsulaqatar.com/Display_news.asp?section=World_News&subsection=Gulf%2C+Middle+East+%26+Africa&month=April2005&file=World_News2005042021011.xml

⁶ <http://www.iranfocus.com/modules/news/article.php?storyid=1189>

- On 19 January 2005, Amnesty International reported that “Ali, a 16-year-old student, may be at risk of imminent execution...Amnesty International has recently learned that Ali was sentenced to death in June 2004, and his sentence has already been confirmed by the Supreme Court.
- Banafsheh Zand-Bonazzi reported on 27 January 2005⁷, “Women sentenced to death by stoning are buried in the ground up to their necks. Iranian law regulates the size of the stones used by the executioner crowd; stones cannot be big enough to kill the sentenced woman too quickly, as the purpose of this barbaric ritual is to inflict as much pain as possible before death. On the other hand, stones cannot be too small, as each blow must be dramatically painful. [See illustrative image below].



⁷ <http://www.frontpagemag.com/Articles/ReadArticle.asp?ID=16800>

“While stoning captures the imagination of Westerners as the most barbaric act committed under Shariah laws, other forms of sentencing perpetrated by the Islamic Republic are just as horrific. For example, Iran employs several types of body mutilation, from the amputation of hands, arms and legs to the macabre procedure of plucking out the eyeballs of the sentenced without the use of anesthetics. Several photos exist to document such occurrences, in dossiers kept by human rights organizations.

“The international community, in particular European countries, has been quite indifferent to such atrocities. It prefers to engage the Islamic Republic in lucrative business deals, relegating the human rights issue to a mere footnote, a ritualistic and rhetorical passage usually present in high-level discussions with Iranian officials, but never taken seriously or enforced.

“In recent years, as general disaffection towards Iran’s ruling theocratic regime has increased, the number of public executions has also increased significantly. The number of such executions—usually carried out in busy public squares during peak hours, with people sentenced to death hung from cranes—has increased from 75 in the year 2000, to 139 in 2001, to 300 in 2002. Official statistics are not available for 2003 and 2004, but it is estimated that the number of such executions is now several hundred per year. Even minors and those who are physically and mentally disabled are regularly executed.”

- *AFP* reported that a Tehran court sentenced a teenage girl and two young men to a total of 170 lashes for having had illicit sex, after it ruled out her claim of having been raped.⁸

Due to the steadily increasing human rights abuses of the Islamic Republic (which you will see more of below), Jack Straw’s lackey had to admit that contrary to what the Foreign & Commonwealth Office had said previously about things improving under Khatami was wrong. Rammell said on 7 February 2005, “I would like to reinforce what the Foreign Secretary said in London on 4 February. The signs of

⁸ <http://www.politicalgateway.com/news/read.html?id=3001>

slight improvement in Iran's human rights record we saw after Khatami was first elected in 1997 have not been sustained. This is a matter of profound concern for the British Government.” Well, if it was a matter of sincere concern, you might consider ceasing your legitimization of the Islamic Republic as true government and rescind the economic trade incentives you provide to British business wishing to do business with this murderous regime through your Export Credit Guarantees (ECGD) scheme. Read on...it just gets better and better.

2004

- The US Department of State's 2004 Iran Country Report on Human Rights Practices⁹ highlights many human rights abuses that were carried out by the mullahcracy in 2004, such as the examples listed below (the full report is available at <http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/hrrpt/2004/41721.htm>):

Arbitrary or Unlawful Deprivation of Life

- Exiles and human rights monitors alleged that many of those supposedly executed for criminal offences in the past, such as narcotics trafficking, actually were political dissidents.
- In January, security forces killed four persons and injured many others when they attacked striking copper factory workers in the Khatunabad village near Shahr-i Babak.
- In February, security forces killed seven persons in post-Majlis election violence in the towns of Andimeshk and Izeh in Khuzestan Province and the town of Firuzabad in the Fars Province.

Disappearance

- The Government announced that approximately 4,000 persons – both protesters and vigilantes – were arrested in connection with pro-reform

⁹ <http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/hrrpt/2004/41721.htm>

protests in June 2003. As of December, approximately 130 still were detained.

Torture & Other Cruel, Inhuman, or Degrading Treatment or Punishment

- In August, credible international and local NGOs reported the case of a prisoner in the province of Khuzistan who had to have his hands amputated because prison officials had left him hanging by the wrists and then forgot about him.
- In March 2003, activist Siamak Pourzand was re-imprisoned after his provisional release in November 2002. After his arrest in 2001, Pourzand was tried in March 2002 behind closed doors and sentenced to 11 years in prison for "undermining state security through his links with monarchists and counter-revolutionaries." Pourzand suffered severe health problems while held incommunicado, reportedly including a heart attack, and was allegedly denied proper medical treatment. As of December, Siamak Pourzand was on leave from prison for medical treatment, his condition a direct result of physical, emotional, and mental abuse during 2½ years of imprisonment (over 12 months of which was in solitary confinement). Despite critical health problems, the Government did not allow him to leave the country for treatment.
- In November 2003, four men were reportedly sentenced to death by stoning. Amnesty International reported at least nine cases of amputation since 2002 and four cases of execution of children.
- "Iran's morality police broke up a party being held in the Tehran apartment of 35-year-old Moshen Mofidi. Two of Mofidi's sisters attended the party in the presence of several unmarried men, a situation forbidden by Islamic law.

"Mofidi was jailed and sentenced to 80 lashes for the crimes of corrupting his sisters, owning an illegal satellite dish, and possessing medicines that contained alcohol. Mofidi's sisters were also taken into custody and claim to have been

beaten so severely during their imprisonment that several of their teeth were broken.

“Mofidi, who had been suffering from severe lung and sinus infections at the time of his flogging, died a few days after being released from prison. Iranian officials refused to send his body to Canada, where several of his family members live.”¹⁰

- An article written by Roya Johnson, a former political prisoner in Iran, in June 2004, states that:

“As a young student activist, I spent three years in the women’s ward of one of Iran’s prisons simply for engaging in political activity to promote democratic rights and encouraging others to get involved. It was in prison where I saw first-hand how the mullahs shield their tyrannical rule behind walls of suppression...

“Female prisoners like me were brutalized even more. The mullahs’ misogynous worldview goes through seismic jolts when they see women standing up to them. Many of my childhood friends ended up in the prison. Despite undergoing ceaseless physical and psychological torture, including rape, they remained defiant to the end. Many of them were snatched from our prison cells in the middle of the night and sent to the gallows. Some were buried in unmarked graves and at least two were pregnant when they were executed.

“Relatives of political prisoners are denied access to universities, employment, traveling abroad and anything which requires government approval. Many relatives have been imprisoned just for sympathizing with their loved one’s political views or with the democratic opposition. Some relatives are even executed. In my cell, two teenage sisters were detained simply because they had refused to appear on television and denounce their activist brother, who had already been executed. Both were executed a few years later....”¹¹

¹⁰ *National Review Online*, 4 May 2004, “Dissident Graveyard”

¹¹ *The American Thinker*, 4 June 2004, “Mullahs’ reign of terror in Iran”

- An *AFP* report about the June 2004 72-page report by Human Rights Watch¹² stated that, “Iran has stepped up its suppression of political opposition with an intense campaign of torture and arbitrary arrests, the New York-based Human Rights Watch said in a report released Monday.

“The 72-page report documents systematic abuses of political detainees in Tehran's Evin Prison and in secret jails around the capital since the government launched its current crackdown in 2000.

“ ‘Claims that reforms in Iran have put an end to torture are simply false,’ said Sarah Whitson, executive director of Human Rights Watch's Middle East and North Africa Division. ‘More than ever, journalists, intellectuals and activists are afraid to voice opinions critical of the government,’ Whitson said. The report argued that anti-torture legislation passed by Iran's outgoing reformist parliament in May had not been effectively implemented.

“The long list of maltreatment documented in the report included arbitrary arrest, detention without trial, torture to extract confessions, prolonged solitary confinement, and physical and psychological abuse.

“ ‘The European Union's weak response to continuing human rights violations in Iran is deeply disturbing,’ said Whitson, ‘It's time for the European Union to condemn Iran's record of persecution and torture and to set real benchmarks that the government must meet.’ ”

- On 18 July 2005, Reporters Without Borders¹³ called the trial of those accused of Zara Kazemi's death (see below in 2003 notes) a sham and a mockery: “We are appalled at this denial of justice,” the international press freedom organisation said. “The Iranian judiciary has displayed intolerable cynicism and hypocrisy in a case which the world sees as a test of intent by the Iranian regime, which has been unanimously condemned by international human rights organisations. By

¹² *AFP*, 7 June 2004, “Iran intensifies torture of political critics”

¹³ http://www.rsf.org/article.php3?id_article=10973

turning the trial into a mockery, the authorities have once more totally discredited themselves and deserve to have sanctions imposed on them,” it said.

- 21 August 2004: “Three Iranian men have been hanged in a square in the historic city of Kerman in southeast Iran on Thursday, the conservative *Jomhuri Eslami* daily reported on Saturday...Editor's note - With no transparency, the judicial system of the Islamic Republic of Iran hangs, executes and stones to death under the cover of fighting ‘moral corruption’. The accuracy of these convictions are under serious question.”¹⁴
- Also in August, 16-year old girl Ateqeh Rajabi was hanged in public for “acts incompatible with chastity.” Amnesty International reported: “Amnesty International today expressed its outrage at the reported execution of a girl who is believed to be 16 years old, Ateqeh Rajabi, in Neka in the northern Iranian province of Mazandaran, on 15 August, for ‘acts incompatible with chastity’ (amal-e manafe-ye 'ofat). Ateqeh Rajabi was reportedly publicly hanged on a street in the city centre of Neka.

“Amnesty International is alarmed that this execution was carried out despite reports that Ateqeh Rajabi was not believed to be mentally competent, and that she reportedly did not have access to a lawyer at any stage.

“The execution of Ateqeh Rajabi is the tenth execution of a child offender in Iran recorded by Amnesty International since 1990. Amnesty International has urged Iran's judicial authorities to halt further executions of child offenders - people who were under 18 years old at the time of the offence. This is to bring Iran's law and practice in line with requirements of international human rights law.”¹⁵

14

http://www.khaleejtimes.com/DisplayArticle.asp?xfile=data/middleeast/2004/August/middleeast_August547.xml§ion=middleeast&col=

¹⁵ *Amnesty International*, 23 August 2004, “Amnesty International Outraged at Execution of a 16 Year Old Girl”



- In September 2004, *Radio Farda* reported that it was Iran would execute 3 more children, just after the Rajabi incident: “Following the execution of Atefeh, a 16 year old girl in the northern city of Neka in Iran, who was accused of having had an extramarital sexual affair, the legal experts are now worried about the faith of three young people who are condemned to death by the Islamic courts.”¹⁶
- Also in September 2004, *AFP* reported that: “According to reports in Iran's main newspapers and other media monitored by *AFP*, at least 68 people have been executed in Iran since January 1. Amnesty International reported at least 108 executions took place in 2003 and 113 in 2002.”¹⁷
- Testimony given to the International Moral Court in October 2004 included the following: “The panellists...viewed hours of videotapes smuggled out of Iran depicting the application of medieval style punishments imposed by Islamic courts. One tape showed a male offender on a stretcher having his eyes plucked out.

“Another video recorded a male prisoner having his fingers cut off. A third documented a man, buried up to his chest, being stoned to death, to cries of ‘Allah Akbar!’ – ‘God is Great!’ The panel concluded: ‘There is sufficient material

¹⁶ *Radio Farda*, 8 September 2004, “Iran to execute 3 more children”

¹⁷ *AFP*, 22 September 2004, “Two Hundred Eighty Nine Executions in Iran Since 2002”

evidence to determine that gross and systematic violations of international human rights standards have taken place, and are still being perpetrated in the Islamic Republic of Iran. These violations concern, in particular, the civil and political rights, minority rights, torture and other inhumane treatments such as stoning, amputations, and rape. It will be for a court of law to determine if these findings constitute a crime against humanity.’ ”¹⁸

- On 5 October 2004, *AFP* reported that four men were publicly hanged in Iran.¹⁹
- On 10 October 2004, *AFP* reported that another man was publicly hanged.²⁰
- On 16 October 2004, it was reported that the Islamic Republic sentenced a 13-year old girl to be stoned to death. “Almost two months after having hanged a 16 years-old girl, the ruling Iranian ayatollahs are to commit another human crime by condemning another young girl to stoning. According to Iranian and foreign press, Zhila Izadi, a 13 years old girl from the north-western city of Marivan had been condemned to death by stoning after being found that she had been pregnant from her 15 years-old brother.

“While Zhila as been sentenced to stoning, her brother, jailed in Tehran, is to receive only 150 lashes, in accordance with Islamic laws.”²¹

- Four men were hanged in the town of Sari in the Northern province of Mazandaran in October 2005.²²
- Evidence showed that a 14-year old boy was flogged to death for eating in public during the Islamic month of Ramadan. “The report states that the boy died ‘as a result of brain hemorrhage, after the back of his skull was fractured by a blow from a hard object’. Eye-witnesses had previously reported that Kaveh lost

¹⁸ *The New York Sun*, 1 October 2004, “Iran Barbarity Aired by Court”

¹⁹ *AFP*. 5 October 2004, “Four Hanged in Public in Iran”

²⁰ *AFP*. 10 October 2004, “Another Man Publicly Hanged in Iran”

²¹ *Iran Press Service*, 16 October 2004, “The Islamic Republic About To Stone A 13 Years-Old Girl”

²² <http://www.iranfocus.com/modules/news/article.php?storyid=559>

consciousness while being flogged by agents of Law Enforcement Forces, Iran's paramilitary police force. They said they believed he died because 'the metal cable being used to flog him hit his head'.²³

- According to Amnesty International, a girl with the mental age of 8 was sentenced to death by the Iranian regime. "A 19-year old girl, 'Leyla M', who has a mental age of eight, reportedly faces imminent execution for 'morality-related' offences after being forced into prostitution by her mother as a child. According to a Tehran newspaper report of 28 November, she was sentenced to death by a court in the central Iranian city of Arak and the sentence has now been passed to the Supreme Court for confirmation.

"Leyla was forced into prostitution by her mother when she was eight years old, according to the 28 November report, and was raped repeatedly thereafter. She gave birth to her first child when she was nine, and was sentenced to 100 lashes for prostitution at around the same time. At the age of 12, her family sold her to an Afghan man to become his 'temporary wife'. His mother became her new pimp, 'selling her body without her consent'.

"At the age of 14 she became pregnant again, and received a further 100 lashes, after which she was moved to a maternity ward to give birth to twins. After this 'temporary marriage', her family sold her again, to a 55-year-old man, married with two children, who had Leyla's customers come to his house."

- On 17 December, Amnesty International reported that a woman was to be buried up to her chest stoned to death by the Iranian authorities. "According to reports, Hajieh Esmailvand was sentenced to five years imprisonment, to be followed by execution by stoning, for adultery with an unnamed man who at the time was a 17 year old minor. Although the exact date of her arrest and trial are not known, it is reported that she has been imprisoned in the town of Jolfa, in the north west of Iran, since January 2000."²⁴

²³ <http://www.iranfocus.com/modules/news/article.php?storyid=849>

²⁴ <http://www.amnesty.org.uk/news/press/15825.shtml>

Gosh Jack. Wonder if you discuss any of this with any of the A-list imams you hang out with on your frequent trips to Tehran. If you raised any serious objections to their human rights abuses, by taking away the 'carrots', you might just save some innocent Iranian lives. But that doesn't really matter does it...after all, they're just Iranians...

2003

- A Foreign & Commonwealth Office report released on 18 September 2003 states that: "In Iran, executions, stonings and discrimination against women continued...."²⁵
- 50 hanged or sentenced to death in the beginning of 2003.²⁶
- Four prisoners sentenced to death; 13 teenagers and young persons receive 1,110 lashes.
- 31 prisoners hanged in public or sentenced to death in Iran in first half of January.
- 17 hangings in public and execution sentences in first 10 days of 2003.
- 6 public hangings, 4 death sentences in first 4 days of 2003.

Not bad for one year, not bad at all. Things really have improved, President Khatami. Thank you on behalf of all the Iranian people. Oh wait, you mean there's more?

²⁵ *Associated Press*, 19 September 2003, "Human rights better in Iraq, not so elsewhere, U.K. says"

²⁶ www.iranncrfac.org (also reference for the following statistics in 2003)



- “90 prisoners have been lashed 4,710 times on the orders of a judge in Yaftabad judiciary complex in southern Tehran.”²⁷
- “According to *Quds* newspaper, the supreme court of the Islamic regime of Iran has sentenced four people to stoning in the city of Mashhad-Iran. In addition to the death sentence, all four were also sentenced to lashes and imprisonment.”²⁸
- “Amnesty International is concerned at reports that Reza Nazaarit, Mohamaad Safaavi, Mehdi Boyeri and Hoseyn Amiri may be at risk of imminent cross amputations.”²⁹
- In July 2003, the Iranian regime held thousands of citizens in jail in a violent crack-down on peaceful protesters. “ ‘Fierce clashes are going on here. Around 400 anti-riot police and vigilantes are beating up protesters and taking them away in buses,’ a witness said on condition of anonymity. Last week's protests, the largest in months, began with students demonstrating against plans to privatise

²⁷ *Entekhab*, 5 January 2003, “90 prisoners lashed 4710 times”

²⁸ International Committee Against Stoning, 11 November 2003

²⁹ *The Amnesty International's Urgent Action*, 8 January 2003, “Fear of Cross Amputation in Iran”

universities. The protests snowballed into broader displays of opposition to Iran's clerical establishment, led by supreme leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei. The protests largely stopped after a large security deployment and the unleashing of hard-line thugs to attack the protesters.”

- Zahra Kazemi, the Canadian journalist, was beaten to death by a high-ranking Iranian official while being held in custody in Iran. The official who headed the enquiry team into Ms. Kazemi's murder was none other than the former judge Saeed Mortezaei, known as the 'butcher of the newspapers'. He alone has shut down more than 100 publications and jailed scores of journalists and writers. The fact that the story of the murder did not make big headlines at the time with institutions such as the BBC, who in fact originally echoed the Islamic Republic's lie, reporting that she felt "ill" during an interrogation and had a stroke, is sickening, and another example of Britain's media failing to report the truth of what is taking place in Iran (this notion will be expanded upon in later pages). True to standard BBC practise, once enough international attention and pressure had built up to bring out the truth out about Zahra Kazemi's death, the BBC aired a television program a few months ago that said the Iranian regime was responsible for her death. This is too little, too late, and demonstrates where the institutions' biases lay.

It seems the 'reformists' are not only bringing freedom of the press to the domestic media, they are showing foreigners just how free things are in Iran these days too!

- “Ahmad Batebi, a student of film production attached to Tehran University was 21 years old when he was arrested in July 1999 during clashes between students and the security forces in central Tehran. From the end of June 1999 until the day of his arrest Ahmad Batebi was, with the authorisation of his university, producing a documentary about the dangers of drug addiction and social problems. When he heard about the student dormitory disturbances, he went to cover the incident and



was subsequently arrested by a plainclothes militiaman who was present at the student demonstration. Ahmad Batebi has been in prison since then and was sentenced to death after a secret trial by the Revolutionary Court; his sentence was later reportedly commuted to 15 years imprisonment by the Leader of the Islamic Republic of Iran.

“In March 2000, he wrote an open letter from prison to the Head of the Judiciary describing his treatment in detention. Ahmad Batebi alleged that an official report available from the Law Enforcement Forces showed that he was condemned to flogging; he was blindfolded and the sentence was carried out in the same room where he was being held. He was later transferred by bus to another location where he was separated from the other people arrested. The following brief account of what happened to him during his interrogation and trial is according to his own testimony in the open letter.

“Ahmad Batebi said in the open letter that soldiers bound his hands and secured them to plumbing pipes. They beat his head and abdominal area with soldier’s shoes. They insisted that he sign a confession of the accusations made against him. The next day, he was thrown onto the floor, they stood on his neck and cut off all his hair and parts of his scalp causing it to bleed. They beat him so severely with their heavy shoes that he lost consciousness, and when he regained consciousness, they started their actions again, ordering him to write and sign a ‘confession’. When he refused, they took him to another room, blindfolded him and secured his bound hands to the window bars.

“During his interrogations, they threatened several times to execute Ahmad Batebi and to torture and rape his family members as well as imprison them for long terms. The investigators ordered him to confess to false allegations and under extreme duress; he signed a ‘confession’ fearing that they would carry out their threats to him and his family.”³⁰

³⁰ <http://www.indymedia.org.uk/en/2002/06/33364.html>

His is the fate faced by so many other innocent Iranians who have voiced their disapproval of the current regime.



Maybe such atrocities would stop if the next time Amnesty International comes to investigate the jails, they actually go to the jails rather than staying in their comfortable hotels and hosting prisoners hand-picked by the mullahs. Maybe.

- *Agence France Presse* said on 4 January 2003: “A moratorium on executions by stoning is only temporary, a top Iranian conservative cleric said Saturday, while admitting that the practice had hurt the Islamic Republic’s image abroad. ‘Stonings have been provisionally suspended due to their negative effects, but this suspension is provisional,’ Hojatoleslam Mohsen Gharavian...was quoted saying.”³¹
- And then: “The...Foreign Minister while visiting the European Parliament on January 21st 2003 was confronted with tough questions...Answering Ms Pernille Frahm who asked him, ‘are you for stoning or against stoning?’, he said: ‘The law of stoning cannot be changed’.”³²

³¹ *Agence France Presse*, 4 January 2003, “Suspension on execution by stoning is temporary: cleric”

³² *Iran Liberation*, 16 February 2003, “The law of stoning cannot be changed”

2002

- 474 public executions were announced in 2002; a 50% rise compared with the previous year.³³
- Professor Maurice Copithorne in his report to the United Nations Human Rights Commission in March 2002 expressed concern at the “apparent rise in flogging and execution, over the public application of such punishments and over their apparent application in some cases to minors” and the “recent cases of stoning to death.” And in his report of 2001, he states, “Breaches of human rights are in large part as common today as they were five years ago.” (Please refer to the appendices for photographic evidence of stonings).

Ah good, one more step toward that ever elusive “Islamic civil society”, or is this what you mean by Islamic civility, President Khatami?

- “Human rights organisations point to the steep rise in executions from...last year...and say that stonings are being carried out for the first time since the mid-1990’s.” Secret film footage smuggled out of Iran and seen by *The Sunday Telegraph* in October 2002 “...showed young people dangling from cranes, stonings and gouging out of eyes. Jack Straw...visited Iran last week as part of a tour of Iraq’s neighbours. Rather than condemn the regime for human rights abuses he is understood to have offered his counterpart, Kamal Kharrazi, Britain’s help in getting Iran taken off America’s list of pariah states....”³⁴

³³ www.iranncrfac.org

³⁴ *The Sunday Telegraph*, 13 October 2002, “Smuggled pictures reveal mass hangings in Iran”



Excellent, Mr Straw, glad to see you've got your priorities straight.

- “The two women known as Ferdows B and Sima have reportedly been sentenced to be stoned to death in Iran.”³⁵
- “A prisoner named Mohammad Reza who had been condemned to amputation of one hand, had his fingers chopped off in public in the western town of Toyseran in order to deter others.”³⁶
- “A young girl and a boy were flogged in public in Tehran for the crime of having become acquainted through the Internet.”³⁷
- *Reuters* reported the following on 27 October 2002: “In response to Swiss Foreign Minister who raised objection to practices such as hanging and stonings, Kharrazi said Iran was bound by its adherence to Islamic law. ‘For example, on hangings we said it is our Islamic law and we cannot change it. Through such talks we can further clarify the issues.’”³⁸
- “In response to the objection raised by Belgian Deputy Prime Minister, Khatami’s chief advisor on women’s affairs Zahra Shojaee said: ‘Stoning to death has been

³⁵ *Amnesty International*, 9 May 2002, “Fear of Imminent Executions by Stoning”

³⁶ *Kayhan*, 19 January 2002, “Four fingers chopped off in public”

³⁷ *Abrar*, 19 December 2002, “Girl and boy flogged in public”

³⁸ *Reuters*, 27 October 2002, “Hanging is our law we cannot change it”

sanctioned to uphold the sanctity of the family and family values'...amid reports that at least two women are on death row in Iran facing execution by stoning."³⁹

Why did the international community and media get into such frenzy about the stoning of one woman in Nigeria, when stoning is still taking place in relatively large numbers in Iran, and all major governments are aware of it?

2001

- Amnesty International reported the following abuses in their 2002 report on Iran, covering the period between January – December 2001⁴⁰: “Scores of political prisoners, including prisoners of conscience, were arrested and others continued to be held in prolonged detention without trial or following unfair trials. Some had no access to lawyers or family. In a continuing clamp-down on freedom of expression and association, led by the judiciary, scores of students, journalists and intellectuals were detained. At least 139 people, including one minor, were executed and 285 flogged many in public.”
- Further details from the report included:
 - There were increasing indications of social, regional and ethnic disquiet and unrest. In July, clothing and shoe factory employees protested, including in front of parliament, over unpaid wages. In the same month, disturbances occurred when Tehran officials attempted to destroy unauthorised housing. In August, an announcement that the government planned to divide the Khorasan province led to riots in Sabzevar in which three people reportedly died. Thousands of people were detained in October following public disorder after international football matches in Tehran. In July, student groups marked the anniversary of a raid by the security forces on student dormitories in Tehran in 1999, when at least one student was allegedly killed and others were ill-treated.

³⁹ *Ressalat*, 6 July 2002, “Stonings uphold the sanctity of the family and family values”

⁴⁰ Amnesty International, Report on Iran, 2002 (<http://web.amnesty.org/web/ar2002.nsf/mde/iran!Open>)

- In March and April, the Revolutionary Court ordered the arrest of at least 60 academics, journalists and intellectuals associated with the *Melli Mazhabi* (national-religious trend), notably the *Nehzat-e Azadi*, Iran Freedom Movement. Some were released within days and many others between May and October. In November, at least 26 detainees were publicly accused by the judiciary of “acts against national security” and “seeking to overthrow the state by illegal means,” vaguely worded charges which could attract long prison sentences. In November, trial proceedings against at least 12 members of the *Nehzat-e Azadi* were initiated with the reading of a 500-page indictment. The trials had not started by the end of 2001, but at least six other detainees - including Dr Habibollah Payman and Dr Reza Raiss-Toussi - remained in detention without charge at the end of the year.
- In March, over 150 parliamentarians issued an open letter expressing concern about the arrests. The detainees’ families repeatedly protested at the arrests to the judiciary, the Islamic Human Rights Commission and the parliamentary Article 90 Commission, and in June they demonstrated outside the UN offices in Tehran.
- Arrested in March, Mohammad Bastehnegar was held incommunicado until May. His wife informed parliamentarians that he was threatened with death and the arrest of his family if he did not write a confession, and that he appeared to have been drugged.
- At least 139 people, including one minor, were executed, at least two by stoning and one by beheading. More than 285 individuals were flogged. The true figures may have been considerably higher.

All in all, not a bad year. An eye for an eye is fair enough, after all.

2000

- In its 2001 report on Iran, covering the period from January – December 2000, Amnesty International said that “Scores of political prisoners continued to be held; among them were prisoners of conscience and others sentenced in previous years after unfair trials. A clamp-down on freedom of expression resulted in the arbitrary arrest and imprisonment of scores of journalists. Reports of torture and ill-treatment continued. At least 75 people were executed during 2000; the true number may have been considerably higher.”⁴¹ Some of the report details included:
 - Scores of people were arrested and injured in provincial centres throughout the year during civil unrest over social conditions, policing and the allocation of resources.
 - Student demonstrations occurred throughout the year. In Tehran, Tabriz and elsewhere, scores of students commemorated the anniversary of the July 1999 demonstrations in Tehran, while in Khorramabad, Lorestan, in August, two well-known reformist theologians were prevented from addressing a conference organised by a student group. Dozens of people were reportedly injured and arrested in the disturbances which followed. Many investigations ensued, including by parliament and the National Security Council, which indicated that actions by Revolutionary Guard officials and *Basij* (Mobilisation) forces, among others, precipitated the unrest and injuries.
 - There were continued reports of psychological torture including death threats. No investigation into any allegations of torture - such as those made by journalist Akbar Ganji, who stated in court in November that he had been tortured by prison officials at Evin - was known to have been undertaken.

⁴¹ Amnesty International, Report 2001, Iran (<http://www.hrw.org/wr2k1/mideast/iran.html>)

- At least 49 floggings were reported, many for "depraved dancing", and 10 amputations, often in connection with theft. However, the true number may have been considerably higher.
- In December, the trial began of 18 individuals, including former senior Ministry of Intelligence officials, charged in connection with their alleged involvement with the murder of two politicians and two writers in 1998. These cases, which form part of the "Serial Murders" cases, were tried in the Tehran Military Court behind closed doors, allegedly for "security reasons." The specific charges against the accused were not known. At the start of the trial, only five defendants, said to be the main perpetrators of the killings, were in custody, while others, suspected accomplices, were free on bail. By 31 December, one of the defendants, Mostafa Kazemi, had reportedly confessed to having ordered the killings. It was not known where and under what circumstances this confession was made. Shirin Ebadia lawyer representing one of the victims' families, had earlier stated that the judiciary had not given her access to the case files and in December, a lawyer for the families of the two writers, Nasser Zarafshan, was detained for suggesting that other unsolved murders formed part of the case and should be investigated and tried simultaneously. The verdicts were expected in January.
- In July, Brigadier General Farhad Nazari and 18 officials of the Law Enforcement Forces were acquitted by a military court of disobeying Ministry of the Interior orders in connection with a raid on student dormitories during the July 1999 student demonstrations.
- Following a closed trial that ended in September, Shirin Ebadi and Mohsen Rahami, human rights defenders and lawyers, received suspended sentences and five years' suspension from practising law in connection with the production and distribution of the videotaped

“confessions” of Amir Farshad Ebrahimi. His videotaped testimony included statements concerning his former group, *Ansar-e Hezbollah* (Partisans of the Party of God), and how the group was instructed to break up public meetings and beat up reformist activists.

Wow, how does one book a vacation to this veritable paradise? Just ask Jack Straw and John Simpson what travel agent they use?

1999

- In late February 1999, an ex-police chief accused of ordering a brutal crackdown on university students went on trial in Iran. “One student testified he was beaten by police and vigilantes and thrown out of a third-floor dormitory window. Another showed the judge his hollow eye socket, saying he had been hit by a tear gas canister. ‘It was a nightmare,’ said a third student, Ali Noruzi, who suffered a broken leg. ‘The word cruelty doesn’t describe what they did. They beat us with sticks, iron pipes, chains.’...The crackdown provoked six days of massive demonstrations in several major cities in Iran – the worst unrest since...1979...Four days after the first raid, police again used force to end the protests. Three people were killed in the unrest – a student, a cleric and a soldier – and more than 200 were wounded...In the second wave of violence on 12 July, Mohsen Jamali, a final-year ophthalmology student, lost his eye.⁴² (Again, please refer to photographic evidence included in the appendices).



⁴² *Associated Press Newswires*, 29 February 2000, “Students narrate beatings in landmark trial of ex-police chief”

So, the “reformist” president presides over the worst violence against Iran’s own people since 1979.

The things these students learn in Iran are truly unique. They are truly being taught a lesson. No wonder they all want to stay in the country when they graduate...

According to the International Monetary Fund, Iran stands in first place in emigration among 91 developing and developed countries and 150 to 180 thousand Iranians immigrate to other countries every year. The Tehran Times itself even admitted the country’s ‘brain drain’, writing that “120 out of 240 young Iranian intellectuals who were awarded prizes at scientific competitions have immigrated. More than 90 of them are residing in the United States.”⁴³

- On 16 July 1999, *Reuters* reported, “more than 10,000 people had been arrested over the violence in Tehran.”
- From the time Khatami came to power through March 1999, his record was: “320 hangings, nine stoned in public, 28 Iranian dissidents assassinated abroad.”⁴⁴

And, just after Khatami’s election in 1998...

- Professor Maurice Copithorne stated in his March 1998 report to the UN Human Rights Commission that “the number of executions continues to grow sharply; the use of cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment continues unabated.”

Where were the reforms Khatami promised when he got elected?

Further, instead of bringing increased openness to the country’s media outlets, a record number of media organisations have been closed during the reign of the so-called ‘reformist’, President Khatami. In fact, Iran has held the exclusive right for

⁴³ *Tehran Times*, 12 July 2004, “Brain Drain Problem Hitting Critical Mass”

⁴⁴ NAIAB, 11 August 1999

many years of jailing and torturing more members of the press than any other country in the region, and eliminating nearly all non-regime-supporting organisations.

- The Islamic Republic has recently carried out a sweeping attack against web loggers ('bloggers'), some of which are listed below.
 - Human Rights Watch reported in February 2005⁴⁵ that "The Iranian government sentenced the prominent blogger Arash Cigarchi to 14 years in prison for expressing his opinions on the Internet and in the international press, marking a new low for freedom of expression in Iran, Human Rights Watch said today. The Iranian government is sending a message to its critics: keep silent or face years in prison," said Widney Brown, deputy program director of Human Rights Watch.
 - On 15 February 2005, Reporters Without Borders⁴⁶ condemned the imprisonment of two Iranian Internet users in the past 10 days, writing that "Iran was undergoing the Middle East's biggest-ever crackdown on online free expression.

"Cyber-dissident Mojtaba Lotfi was imprisoned on 5 February after an appeal court confirmed a sentence of three years and 10 months in prison for posting "lies" on the Internet. Blogger Motjaba Saminejad was reimprisoned on 12 February when a judge doubled the bail, making it impossible for him to raise the money.

" 'How can Iranian officials parade at a UN summit on the Internet at the same time as they are jailing bloggers?' Reporters Without Borders asked, referring to Iran's participation in a preparatory meeting of the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) in two days' time."

⁴⁵ <http://www.hrw.org/english/docs/2005/02/23/iran10204.htm>

⁴⁶ *Reporters Without Borders*, 15 February 2004, "Appeal Court Confirms Prison For Cyber-Dissident While Blogger is Reimprisoned"

- “Reporters Without Borders has condemned the mistreatment in prison of cyberdissidents and webloggers after an Iranian committee report concluded that public confessions of two of them, Omid Memarian and Rozbeh Mir Ebrahimi, were obtained under duress.

“We fear that the authorities are succeeding in purging the web of all critical content through brutality, intimidation and censorship,” the worldwide press freedom organisation said. Confirmation that Memarian and Mir Ebrahimi were mistreated after their arrests in November 2004, along with a group of other online journalist, was given on 4 January 2005 in a report from the committee for Monitoring the Implementation of the Constitution, on which both conservatives and reformists sit.”

- “On 28 January, Reporters Without Borders strongly condemned the hounding by the authorities of Taghi Rahmani, who since 1981 has spent a total of 5,000 days in prison, sentenced each time in connection with his journalistic work. Rahmani has been in jail this time for 19 months without charge and the worldwide press freedom organisation called on the Iranian authorities for his immediate and unconditional release.

With ten journalists behind bars, Iran is the Middle East's largest prison for the profession and is one of the world's ten most repressive countries in terms of press freedom.

- In December 2004, *The Independent* detailed the story of Arash Nassouri, who dared to say that the Iranian regime should give up its practice of flogging. Here is very brief account what happened to him for perpetrating this hideous crime against the mullahs:

“ ‘They hung me upside down and handcuffed me with a bar under my knees,’ he says. ‘They started kicking and punching me...beating me in every part of my back, my stomach, face, everywhere. My backbone was broken. But the pain was worst when they hit my face. My nose was already broken, my teeth were

broken. Every time they hit my face there was a lot of pain. I was ready to say anything.'

"Mr Nassouri still walks with a profound limp, and is awaiting his second operation to mend a seriously injured back, which is the legacy of his torture. Six years after his horrific ordeal, he still takes nine different tablets a day to treat pain and depression.

"Now 33, Mr Nassouri, who has gained political asylum in Britain, still attends weekly counselling sessions to try to come to terms with the experience he says ruined his life."⁴⁷

- In November 2004, Reporters Without Borders called on women's media and women's rights groups around the world to rally to the defence of two Iraqi women journalists who were arrested in the past eight days in connection with their work for pro-reform websites.

"The latest arrest is that of Mahboudeh Abbasgholizadeh, the editor of Ferzaneh, a magazine about women's issues, who was detained on 1 November on her return from London, where she took part in the European Social Forum. Police searched her Tehran home, confiscating her computer hard drive and other items."⁴⁸

- In October 2004, Reporters Without Borders deplored the arrest of Iranian journalist Fershteh Ghazi, of the daily Etemad ("Confidence"), for working with reformist Internet news websites and expressed alarm at reports that the intelligence services were preparing to accuse her and five other imprisoned journalists of "adultery" in a bid to hide the political nature of their detention.

"Such accusations, about private matters, would serve to cover up a flagrant

⁴⁷ *The Independent*, 11 December 2004, "I Was Tortured for Saying the Flogging Must End in Iran"

⁴⁸ http://www.rsf.org/article.php3?id_article=11793

violation of free expression and would be a disgusting legal spectacle," the worldwide press freedom organisation said.⁴⁹

- On 21 October 2004, *AFP* reported that "Around a hundred journalists took part in a sit-in in Tehran on Thursday to protest at a recent wave of arrests of journalists. Iranian authorities have in recent weeks clamped down on what they call illegal websites, detaining a number of reformist journalists."⁵⁰
- Qatar's *The Peninsula* reported that on 29 September 2004, "An Iranian journalist who has worked on the political pages of two reformist dailies in the Islamic republic has been arrested, his wife told the student news agency *ISNA* yesterday.

"Rozbeh Mir-Ebrahimi, who has worked for *Etemad* and *Jomhuriat* newspapers, 'was arrested by people who said they were from the police' on Monday morning, Sulmaz Sharifi said."⁵¹

- On 10 September a reformist journalist working on the cultural pages of the Iranian newspaper *Etemad* was arrested.⁵²
- *The Ottawa Citizen* also reported on 9 September that a second Iranian dissident who risked his life to speak with a reporter from their paper in Iran this spring was arrested and jailed by security forces of the Islamic regime.

"Bina Darabzand was arrested on August 17th outside the offices of the United Nations in Tehran, where he and several other dissidents had gone to ask the international organization to help persecuted Iranian democrats. Mr. Darabzand, 46, met several times with this reporter in Tehran this April, putting himself at

⁴⁹ http://www.rsf.org/article.php3?id_article=11752

⁵⁰ *AFP*, 21 October 2004, "Iranian Journalists Protest Media Clampdown With Sit-in"

⁵¹

[http://www.thepeninsulaqatar.com/Display_news.asp?section=World_News&subsection=Gulf%2C+Middle+East+%26+Africa&month=September2004&file=World_News2004092924547.x](http://www.thepeninsulaqatar.com/Display_news.asp?section=World_News&subsection=Gulf%2C+Middle+East+%26+Africa&month=September2004&file=World_News2004092924547.xml)

[ml](http://www.thepeninsulaqatar.com/Display_news.asp?section=World_News&subsection=Gulf%2C+Middle+East+%26+Africa&month=September2004&file=World_News2004092924547.xml)

⁵²

http://www.khaleejtimes.com/DisplayArticle.asp?xfile=data/middleeast/2004/September/middleeast_September252.xml§ion=middleeast&col=

danger on each occasion. He is a cheerful and strongly-built man with a greying moustache and thick wavy hair. He spends hours on the road, driving across Iran from his home on the Black Sea coast to meet with other dissidents.”⁵³

- On 19 July 2004, Reporters Without Borders strongly condemned as 'unacceptable' the Iranian regime's suspension of two leading reformist daily newspapers “*Vaghayeh Ettefaghieh* and *Jomhouriat*” as well as the monthly *Aftab* and said the moves appeared to herald a new wave of repression. It called for the suspensions to be lifted at once.⁵⁴ *Voice of America* reported on 26 July that journalists were marching in protest to these closures.⁵⁵
- *Khaleej Times* reported on 11 July that “The Iranian judiciary issued an arrest warrant for the chief editor of the reformist daily *Tosse'e* and closed down a monthly.”⁵⁶
- On 28 June 2004, Reporters Without Borders addressed an open letter to the European Union asking about the EU delegation that was in Tehran on 14-15 June taking part in a dialogue about human rights with the Islamic Republic. The organisation criticised the continuing threats against members of the news media and the deterioration in the situation of imprisoned journalists.

"This dialogue, launched in 2001, has not yet led to any decrease in repression but it allows the Iranian regime to maintain 'good relations' with the European countries," Reporters Without Borders secretary-general Robert Ménard pointed out in his letter.

"Reporters Without Borders would like to ask you in future to take account of the reports and recommendations provided by the independent and representative organisations of Iranian civil society," the letter said, urging the European Union

⁵³ *Ottawa Citizen*, 9 September 2004, "Iran Arrests Second Dissident Who Risked Interview"

⁵⁴ http://www.rsf.org/article.php3?id_article=10988

⁵⁵ VOA News, 26 July 2004, "Iranian Journalists Launch Protest in Tehran"

⁵⁶

<http://www.khaleejtimes.com/DisplayArticle.asp?xfile=data/middleeast/2004/July/middleeast/July271.xml§ion=middleeast>

to adopt a 'firm position' with the Iranian authorities as regards putting a stop to the repression.

"We point out that 120 newspapers have been banned since 2001, more than 50 journalists have been detained and 11 are still in detention, making Iran the biggest prison for journalists in the Middle East," the letter continued. "One wonders what to make of the Iranian government's remark on 20 June that it is the European Union that should learn from Iran about human rights."⁵⁷

- On 23 April 2004, *AFP* reported that "The director of Iran's twice-weekly paper *Aban*, close to the liberal opposition, has been given a suspended jail sentence of six months and barred from working in the press for two years...."⁵⁸
- The *Iran Press Service* reported in April 2004 that "The Islamic Republic of Iran added insult to injury last week by awarding the prize of 'Merit' and 'Best Servant' to Mr. Sa'id Mortazavi, a judge responsible for the closure of more than one hundred newspapers, magazines and publications and the arrest of dozen of leading journalists on the orders of his boss, Ayatollah Ali Khameneh'i.

"The decision was greeted with increased concern among Iranian press, scholar and intelligentsia circles seeing in it the regime's intention to continue crackdown on the press and free expression, already drastically limited, as seen by the 18 months imprisonment a court in the north-eastern city of Tabriz cut for Mr. Ensafali Hedayat, an independent reporter, accused of 'espionage, propaganda against the Islamic Republic' and 'insulting the regime's officials, including the leader'.

"The award of this title to Mortazavi would be the height of absurdity if the situation were not so tragic", the Paris-based Reporters Sans Frontieres (RSF, or Reporters Without Borders) said, adding that the Islamic Republic was 'just highlighting its arbitrary and repressive nature by celebrating this travesty of justice'."

⁵⁷ http://www.rsf.org/article.php3?id_article=10852

⁵⁸ *AFP*, 23 April 2004, "Newspaper Director Sentenced for Act Against Iranian Security"

- A Freedom of the Press 2003 survey, carried out by Freedom House, concluded that more than 80 publications have been shut down in the country since a crackdown on the independent press began in April 2000. A commission dominated by religious hard-liners was recently established to monitor the Internet and news Web sites considered to be “illegal.”⁵⁹
- “The Iranian government imprisons people for expressing their views on a scale unmatched by any other country yet examined, according to the first human rights delegation to visit Iran in seven years. ‘It is the first time the working group has been confronted with such a practice on such a scale’, said Louis Joinet, a French jurist who heads the U.N. Working Group on Arbitrary Detention team that spent 12 days reviewing Iran’s judicial and penal system....The clampdown on expression has increased over the past three years.”⁶⁰
- The World Association of Newspapers noted on 27 January 2003 that Iran holds more journalists in prison than any other country in the region.⁶¹
- In 2000, Amnesty International reported that, “In an unprecedented clampdown on freedom of expression and association, at least 34 journalists, writers and human rights defenders were questioned, detained and tried; some were tortured. At least 12 were imprisoned, usually after unfair trials. These abuses occurred as a result of complaints filed by individuals and state bodies, often under the control of the Leader, which frequently led to legal action against journalists and commentators. These and other people were tried on the basis of vaguely worded laws before Revolutionary Courts and the Special Court for the Clergy, where procedures often fall far short of international standards for fair trial. They were prisoners of conscience. At least 30 publications, the majority supportive of reformist groups, were closed or suspended by judicial order.” Also: “The Press

⁵⁹ CASCEN, 1 May 2003

⁶⁰ *The Miami Herald*, 27 February 2003, “In Iran, dissidents face jail”

⁶¹ *World Association of Newspapers*, 17 January 2003, “Political Cartoon Leads to Arrests, Closures in Iran”

Law, passed in April by the previous parliament, introduced harsh measures that were used to limit freedom of expression. In August, new deputies introduced legislation to reform the Press Law, but the reform was halted by an unprecedented intervention into parliamentary affairs by the Leader.”⁶²

In addition to bringing freedom of the press to Iranian people, Khatami promised to create a “civil society.” His record thus far has certainly been extraordinary. And the Foreign & Commonwealth Office continues to believe that things are getting progressively better? Some statistics are sufficient to paint the general picture.

- According to the Iranian government’s own figures in 2001, which are surely biased in any case:
 - 40% of Iranians are living in relative or absolute poverty
 - Over the course of the year that ended in March 2000, some 220,000 educated and middle-class Iranians emigrated to the West
 - The president has admitted that jobs do not exist for 42% of the 2 million or so Iranians who will have entered the workforce during the year that ends in March 2002
 - Of the 1.5 million school-leavers who sat university exams in the summer of 2001, the system had room for a mere 150,000
- “In Iran, for 25 years, the ruling mullahs have enforced humiliating and sadistic rules and punishments on women and girls, enslaving them in a gender apartheid system of segregation, forced veiling, second-class status, lashing and stoning to death.

“...Joining a global trend, the fundamentalists have added another way to dehumanise women and girls: buying them and selling them for prostitution. Exact numbers are impossible to attain, but according to an official source in

⁶² Amnesty International, Report 2001, Iran

Tehran, there has been a 635% increase in the number of teenage girls in prostitution. The magnitude of this statistic conveys how rapidly this form of abuse has grown. In Tehran, there are an estimated 84,000 women and girls in prostitution, many of them are on the streets, others are in the 250 brothels that reportedly operate in the city. The trade is also international: thousands of Iranian women and girls have been sold into sexual slavery abroad....Slave traders take advantage of any opportunity in which women and children are vulnerable. For example, following the recent earthquake in Bam, orphaned girls have been kidnapped and taken to a known slave market in Tehran where Iranian and foreign traders meet....Popular destinations for victims of the slave trade are the Arab countries in the Persian Gulf.

“...Women report that in order to have a judge approve a divorce they have to have sex with them.”⁶³ When the Foreign & Commonwealth Office says things like “We welcome initiatives such as...the bill making divorce easier for women.”⁶⁴

Wow. One wonders what women had to do before such wonderful reforms in order to get a divorce. Sleep with two judges?

“Women who are arrested for prostitution say they must have sex with the arresting officer. There are reports of police locating young women for sex for the wealthy and powerful mullahs... For example in Karaj, the former head of a Revolutionary Tribunal and seven other senior officials were arrested in connection with a prostitution ring that used 12 to 18 year old girls from a shelter called the Centre of Islamic Orientation.

“...In 2002 officials told [a journalist]: ‘We are deporting you...because you have taken pictures of prostitutes. This is not a true reflection of life in our Islamic Republic. We don’t have prostitutes.’ Yet, earlier the same year, officials of the Social Department of the Interior Ministry suggested legalising prostitution as a way to manage it and control the spread of HIV.”

⁶³ *FrontPage Magazine*, 27 January 2004, “Sex Slave Jihad”

⁶⁴ Letter from the Foreign & Commonwealth Office dated 13 January 2004

- “Drug addiction is epidemic throughout Iran, and some addicted parents sell their children to support their habits.”⁶⁵

⁶⁵ (As above)



The Islamic Republic's Support of Terrorism & Rise to Nuclear Power

Besides the regime's domestic violations against human rights and freedoms of the press, the Islamic Republic has also consistently won the internationally respected accolade of being the leading supporter of terrorism worldwide.⁶⁶ The nominations for the Islamic Republic's best performances include:

- The fact that its own leaders (Ali Khamenei and Hashemi Rafsanjani) were convicted for the "...1992 murders of dissident Iranian-Kurdish leaders in a Berlin restaurant and found that the killings were ordered by the 'highest state levels' in Iran's capital."⁶⁷

⁶⁶ US State Department, 2003

⁶⁷ <http://www.cnn.com/world/9704/10/germany.iran>

- Warrants for arrest from a high Argentinean court of a dozen Iranian officials for the “car bomb that exploded at the AMIA headquarters in Buenos Aires that killed 85 people and injured hundreds in 1994,”⁶⁸ in what was the largest-scale attack against a group of Jewish people since Hitler’s time.
- Iran is consistently labelled the #1 terrorist-supporting nation by the US State Department in its annual survey.
- *Dow Jones* reported on 24 March 2005 that “A top U.S. diplomat warned Thursday that the perpetrators of recent bombings in Lebanon would be held ‘directly accountable’ for their acts of violence, and criticized Syria and Iran for what he called their interference in the country.”⁶⁹
- *Newsday* also reported in March 2005 about the mullahs’ silencing of dissenters who reside abroad through murder. “When Abdulrahim Raeesi, an Iranian political science professor, wrote in an underground newspaper that Iran needs more democracy, men from the Ministry of Intelligence and Security soon found him. They arrested and tortured him, so badly, he said, that he had to be hospitalized. Last year, Raeesi escaped from the hospital and fled with his wife and son across the desert into Pakistan to seek political asylum. A few months later, he said, the secret police reached him again. Men with Iranian accents began calling his telephone, warning him to return to Iran and surrender. “Do you think you're safe?’ they asked me” in an e-mail message, Raeesi said. “We have a group for you. Don't make us send this group to get you.’ ”

"On Feb. 7, men with guns kicked in the flimsy door of the grubby rented room that Raeesi shared with two other Iranian asylum-seekers. One roommate, Ahmed Mashoof, was killed in a volley of bullets. Raeesi and the other roommate escaped, scampering from a courtyard to the rooftop.”⁷⁰

⁶⁸ 29 August 2003, *Voice of America News*, “Argentines Sceptical Over Impact of Ex-Iranian Official’s Arrest over 1994 Bombing”

⁶⁹ *Dow Jones Newswires*, 24 March 2005, “US Official Slams Iran’s, Syrian ‘Interference’ In Lebanon”

⁷⁰ *Newsday*, 3 March 2005, “Mullah Power: Iran Sends Killers Abroad To Silence Dissent”

- In February 2005, *The Associated Press* reported that “A Palestinian suicide bomber carrying 20 pounds of explosives blew himself up in a crowd of young Israelis waiting outside a nightclub near Tel Aviv's beachfront promenade just before midnight Friday, killing at least four other people, wounding dozens. A senior commander of a Palestinian militant group said the Lebanese guerrilla group Hezbollah, which is funded by Iran and has been trying to disrupt the cease-fire, hired a Palestinian from the northern West Bank to carry out the bombing.”⁷¹

- Pakistan's *Dawn* reported in February a popular theory that “Osama bin Laden may be in Iran. One of the most senior American diplomats in Pakistan has said the US believes Osama may have been intercepted and detained against his will by Iranian agents while travelling along the border between eastern Iran, Balochistan and Afghanistan.”⁷²

- Hundreds of articles have been written detailing Iran's attempts to destabilize Iraq and prevent any sort of true democracy from emerging there. What follows are selected and illustrative examples of Iran's deeply harmful meddling in Iraq:
 - On 20 February 2005 *Newsweek* reported that “Fresh intel suggests that Tehran is trying to expand its influence over whatever government emerges in postelection Iraq...the Iranian government has been secretly directing its agents inside Iraq to plant themselves in influential positions throughout the Iraqi government – into agencies that handle economic affairs, like the ministries of Oil, Public Works and Finance, as well as departments like the Interior Ministry that handle national security. The Iranians also are directing their agents to infiltrate Iraqi security agencies on the "working level" by taking jobs in regional or local government offices and particularly local police forces.”⁷³

⁷¹ <http://www.rep-am.com/story.php?id=17535>

⁷² <http://www.dawn.com/2005/02/20/int2.htm>

⁷³ <http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/6999382/site/newsweek/>

- *The World Tribune* reported on 10 February 2005: “Iraqi Interior Minister Falah al-Naqib said in Baghdad last week that security forces recently arrested four terrorists who tried to attack a polling place during the Jan. 30 elections. According to Iraqi authorities, the people involved in the arms smuggling admitted to having ties to Iranian intelligence in areas that include Samara, Balad, Najaf and Latifiyah. The captured smugglers provided details of the activities of the Al Fajer, a branch of Iran's Ministry of Intelligence and Security, which is working to recruit Iraqis for terrorist operations.”⁷⁴

- In January 2005 “*Alhurra* – an Arabic-language television station that is funded by our government – broadcast a taped interview with a terrorist named Moayad Ahmed Yasseen, the leader of Jaish Muhammad (Muhammad's Army). He was captured nearly two months ago in Fallujah during the liberation of the city. Yasseen had been a colonel in Saddam's Army, so he was a fighter of some importance. He told *Alhurra* that two other former Iraqi military officers belonging to his group were sent ‘to Iran in April or May, where they met a number of Iranian intelligence officials.’ He said they also met with Iran's supreme leader, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, and were provided with money, weapons, ‘and, as far as I know, even car bombs’ for Jaish Muhammad.”⁷⁵

- In early August, Iraqi “bloggers” documented Iran’s infiltration of Iraq and their counterproductive activities: “The news from some areas in Iraq indicates that at least thousands of Iranian crossed the border inside Iraq for support to MS [Moqtadah al Sadr] militia and as clandestine agents. The Iraqis now knew very well what the Iranian thugs trying to do inside Iraq. Today alone and only in one point the Iraqi Police arrested at least 40 Iranian sneaked into Iraq with out documents in one coach. All are young and probably armed with money and documents which will be kept secret for investigation.

⁷⁴ http://216.26.163.62/2005/me_terror_02_10.html

⁷⁵ *National Review Online*, 10 January 2005, “Circle Squared”

“There are news of about 1000 Iranian crossed with guns to area of Salman Bak and were confronted by the IP and US troops...”⁷⁶

- On 5 August 2004, *Xinhua News* reported that “The police in the central Iraqi city of Karbala arrested four Iranians who were suspectedly involved in carrying out assassinations and bombings in different areas of the war-torn country. The four Iranians were arrested in a wide campaign made by the police in the city in search of foreigners who had entered the country illegally, said Rahman Mishary, media director of the Karbala police. He said the Iranians had admitted their involvement in implementing several terrorist operations.”⁷⁷
- On 27 May, it was discovered that “A government-sponsored website in Iran quoted a member of a state-run paramilitary student organization as saying that: ‘Tens of students from the University of Science and Technology in Iran will be sent to Karbala on Thursday, May 27, as the advance party of the Karbala-bound Battalion to join the defenders of the holy shrines in the city and to fight the occupiers of Islamic lands.’ The website, Rouydad, added that state-organized groups such as Hezbollah and Bassij ‘have begun forming battalions of suicide bombers against Coalition forces in Iraq.’ It also quoted an official of the Revolutionary Guards, Hassan Abbassi, as saying, “Our main weapon is jihad... and through it, we are shaking the foundations of the infidels.”⁷⁸
- In April 2004, it was noted that “Al-Sadr works for Iran. He is an Iranian agent. His authority comes from Iran.

⁷⁶ <http://hammorabi.blogspot.com/>

⁷⁷ http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/2004-08/05/content_1722156.htm

⁷⁸ *USADI*, 27 May 2004, “Iran Mullahs to Dispatch ‘Battalions of Suicide Bombers’ to Iraq”



“Last April, an Iranian cleric, Kadhem al-Husseini al-Haeri, issued a religious edict and distributed to Shiite mullahs in Iraq, calling on them ‘to seize the first possible opportunity to fill the power vacuum in the administration of Iraqi cities.’ The edict, or fatwa, issued April 8, 2003, showed that Shiite clerics in Iraq are receiving significant direction from Iran. The edict said that Shiite leaders have to ‘seize as many positions as possible to impose a fait accompli for any coming government. People have to be taught not to collapse morally before the means used by the Great Satan if it stays in Iraq,’ the fatwa read. ‘It will try to spread moral decay, incite lust by allowing easy access to stimulating satellite channels and spread debauchery to weaken people's faith.’

“The fatwa also instructed the cleric's followers to ‘raise people's awareness of the Great Satan's plans and of the means to abort them.’ On April 7, the day American troops effectively toppled Hussein's government by seizing its main seats of power in Baghdad, al-Haeri sent a handwritten letter to the city of Najaf, appointing Moktada al-Sadr as his deputy in Iraq. Haeri wrote: ‘We hereby inform you that Mr. Moktada al-Sadr is our deputy and representative in all fatwa affairs.’ It added: ‘His position is my position.’ ”⁷⁹

⁷⁹ http://www.worldnetdaily.com/news/article.asp?ARTICLE_ID=37883

*In the wake of these events, it's fascinating that Jack Straw recently said "On the whole, the co-operation we have received from Iran both in respect of Afghanistan and Iraq has been good and productive...and I think the approach we have adopted and have been working on very closely with France and Germany...is the right approach."*⁸⁰

- On 6 May, "U.S. officials said two car bombs were discovered on the Iran-Iraq border near Suleimaniya last week. Terrorists attempted to bring two explosive-laden Hondas into Iraq at the Seyyed Sadeq area of the Iranian border."⁸¹

- In April 2004, *Middle East Newslite* discovered that "Iranian intelligence [has been] operating at least 18 covert centers in Iraq as well as targeting Shi'ites deemed as aligned with the United States in a nearly \$1 billion effort to prevent the spread of democracy in that Arab country... The centers have been located in Baghdad, Basra, Karbala, Najaf, Nasseriya and Suleimaniya, the Iranian defector said. The defector, identified as Haj Saidi and who fled Iran in late 2003, told the London-based daily A-Sharq Al Awsat on April 3 that Iran has sent hundreds of intelligence agents into Iraq over the last 18 months. Many of them came under the guise of Iranian pilgrims and Iraqi refugees. He said more than 300 Iranian agents -- benefiting from about 2,700 safe houses in 14 cities -- were operating in Iraq."⁸²

- Similarly, there are countless accounts of Iran's intimate ties to legally classified terrorist groups such as Al-Qaida, Islamic Jihad and Hezbollah. To wit:
 - *Middle East Newslite* reported on 16 January 2005 that "The Iranian-sponsored Islamic Jihad has been termed a leading contractor of

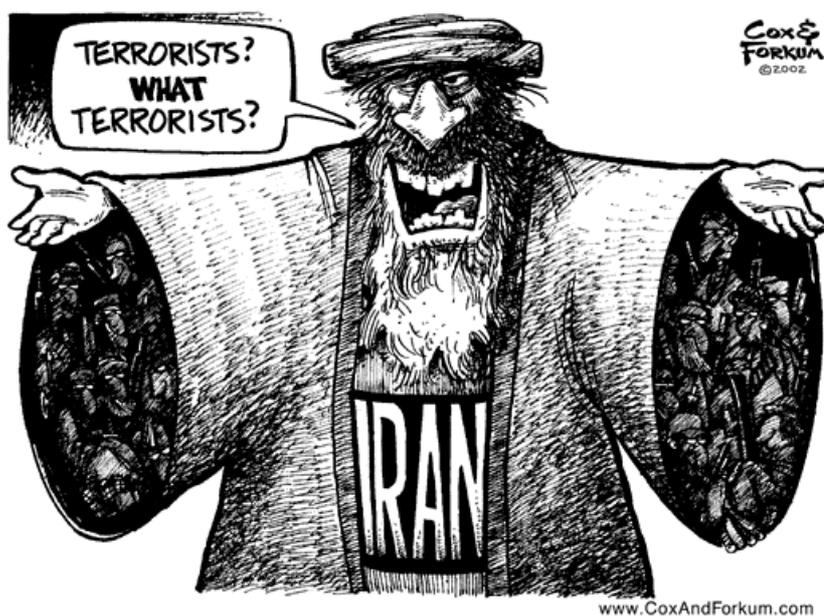
⁸⁰ BBCi, 4 July 2004, "Straw Defends Diplomacy with Iran"

⁸¹ *Geostrategy-Direct.com*, 6 May 2004, "Car Bombs Stopped on Iraq-Iran Border"

⁸² http://www.menewslite.com/stories/2004/april/04_09_2.html

insurgency attacks in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. Security sources said Jihad has used Iranian funding to recruit operatives from other insurgency groups for major attacks against Israel. "Islamic Jihad has long sought cooperation of other groups because it does not have enough operatives," a security source said. "Now, with plenty of Iranian money, Jihad can recruit whomever it wants."⁸³

- An Iranian agent was arrested yesterday in Kuwait for ties to recent al-Qaida-related attacks in several Middle Eastern countries, according to a popular Mideast radio network. *Sawa Radio*, which broadcasts throughout the Middle East, reported the unnamed Iranian agent was apprehended by Kuwaiti security forces after intelligence implicated his involvement in an al-Qaida terror network with prior information on recent attacks in Saudi Arabia.⁸⁴



- In December 2004, *Radio Free Europe* wrote, "Reports...persist that hundreds of Al-Qaeda operatives, along with some 18 senior leaders -- including Saif Adel, Al-Qaeda's military commander, and Osama Bin Laden's son, Saad -- are living in Iran. Spain's top counterterrorism

⁸³ http://www.menewslines.com/stories/2005/january/01_16_3.html

⁸⁴ http://worldnetdaily.com/news/article.asp?ARTICLE_ID=42382

judge has dubbed this Al-Qaeda's 'board of managers,' according to the 1 August "Los Angeles Times.' A French counterterrorism official says that these leaders have 'controlled freedom of movement' inside Iran, *AFP* reported on 15 July, and the London-based Arabic daily "*Al-Sharq al-Awsat*" reports that some are even living in villas near the Caspian Sea coast town of Chalus, *AFP* reported on 28 June.

"Other accounts of their activities are far more disturbing. U.S. communications intercepts indicate that the 12 May 2003 attacks on the expatriate compounds in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, were orchestrated from Iran, according to the 1 August 'Los Angeles Times,' and though others may be involved, European government officials reportedly point to Adel as the primary suspect.

"Moreover, French government officials are reported to suspect that the Al-Qaeda leadership based in Iran played a role in the suicide bombings that targeted Western and Jewish interests in Casablanca, Morocco, that occurred four days after the Riyadh attacks and resulted in the death of 33 civilians as well as 12 suicide bombers.

"Al-Qaeda members in Iran are also said to have funded the Istanbul bombings in November 2003, in which two synagogues, the British Consulate, and a London-based bank were bombed and 63 people were killed, according to court testimony provided by Adnan Ersoz, one of 69 charged in connection with these incidents, *AFP* reported on 13 September."⁸⁵

- Also in November 2004, the London-based *a-Shark el-Awsat* Arabic newspaper reported that Iran furnished Hizbullah with eight drones that were equipped with cameras and radar, and had an ability to fly at a maximum speed of 120 KPH.⁸⁶

⁸⁵ *Radio Free Europe*, 7 December 2004, "What is Al-Qaeda Management Doing in Iran?"

⁸⁶ <http://www.israelnn.com/news.php3?id=71843>

- On 2 November 2004, it was reported that “Iranian money, funneled through Hezbollah, has been partially financing recent Palestinian suicide bombings, possibly including yesterday's suicide attack....”⁸⁷
- In May 2004, *CNS News* reported that “Iran is increasing its influence over Palestinian terrorism through Hizballah involvement in a new trend of terror attacks, which target the vestiges of Israeli-Palestinian cooperation... There has been an escalation in attempts by terrorists during the last few months to strike at "islands of sanity" - places where Israelis and Palestinians have continued to work together despite the troubles.”⁸⁸
- On 14 April, *Middle East Newsline* learned that “Iran has been using Hamas and Hizbullah as part of plans to impose Teheran's authority in Iraq. A report...said Iran has been sponsoring and cooperating with a range of Shi'ite insurgency groups in an effort to develop a power base in Iraq... Following the removal of Saddam Hussein's regime in Iraq, the Iranian clerical dictatorship has mounted a covert effort to establish an allied Shi'a Islamist extremist regime in Iraq," the report...said. Iran has been preparing to do this for many years and has recruited political, military, and covert agent assets among the hundreds of thousands of Shi'a Iraqis who fled Iraq and have lived in Iran for years.”⁸⁹
- “In Afghanistan, Tehran has armed and continues to finance a number of armed groups with the aim of preventing Hamid Karzai...from establishing a support base and gaining a durable hold on power. Iran’s closest allies in Afghanistan are the Hazara Shiites who form a majority of the population in two provinces: Bamiyan and Mayandanshar in central Hindukush. With Iranian money and weapons, the Hazara now have the second most powerful indigenous military force in Afghanistan....But Iran is also supporting the Pushtun extremist leader Gulbuddin Hekmatyar who has concluded an alliance with the remnants of the

⁸⁷ http://www.wnd.com/news/article.asp?ARTICLE_ID=41235

⁸⁸ http://www.menewslines.com/stories/2004/april/04_14_2.html

⁸⁹ http://www.menewslines.com/stories/2004/april/04_14_2.html

Taliban and is mounting growing attacks against the Americans and their allies in southern Afghanistan. Iran has also concluded a number of accords with Ismail Khan, the “Emir” of Herat who controls six western provinces.”⁹⁰

- “Tehran is still the only place where terrorists from all over the world can meet and operate in the open. Every year from 1 to 10 February, Tehran hosts a festival of radicalism in which terror groups, including the last remaining Marxist-Leninist ones, come together to exchange views and coordinate strategies. The Shining Path may have been defeated in Peru. But it still has a big office in one of Tehran’s poshest streets. The main Colombian terror group FARC operates several front companies based in Tehran. At least 22 other terrorist groups maintain offices, and in some cases, such as the PKK, which fought a 15-year war against Turkey, even have operational and logistical bases in various parts of Iran.”⁹¹
- *The Associated Press* reported in November 2004: “The 300 men filling out forms in the offices of an Iranian aid group were offered three choices: Train for suicide attacks against U.S. troops in Iraq, for suicide attacks against Israelis or to assassinate British author Salman Rushdie. It looked at first glance like a gathering on the fringes of a society divided between moderates who want better relations with the world and hard-line Muslim militants hostile toward the United States and Israel. But the presence of two key figures — a prominent Iranian lawmaker and a member of the country’s elite Revolutionary Guards — lent the meeting more legitimacy and was a clear indication of at least tacit support from some within Iran’s government. Since that inaugural June meeting in a room decorated with photos of Israeli soldiers’ funerals, the registration forms for volunteer suicide commandos have appeared on Tehran’s streets and university campuses, with no sign Iran’s government is trying to stop the shadowy movement.”⁹²

⁹⁰ *Townhall*, 11 July 2003, “What to do with Tehran”

⁹¹ (As above)

⁹² *The Associated Press*, 28 November 2004, “Iran Group Canvasses for Suicide Bombers”

- On 17 July 2004, "The 9/11 Commission found...that as many as 10 of the Sept. 11 hijackers passed through Iran – practically on a red carpet – in the year before the attacks, the panel is set to report next week. Most prominently, according to a story on Time magazine's Web site last night, the commission found that Iran gave Bin Laden's minions free passage between Afghanistan and Iran as far back as October 2000. In some cases Iranian officials told border guards not to stamp passports of Al Qaeda soldiers to make it easier for them to cross the frontier."⁹³
- On 10 July 2004, it was reported that the Editor of *Forbes Russia* was shot dead, only shortly after writing a *Forbes* cover story exposing the riches of the Islamic Republic's mullahs entitled "Millionaire Mullahs". He "...was hit four times outside the magazine's office and died in a rescue-squad vehicle, Russian news reports said. The radio station Ekho Moskvyy said shells of two different caliber were found at the scene, indicating at least two assailants."⁹⁴
- In July 2004, "The U.S. expelled two security guards at Iran's mission to the United Nations last week for activities "inconsistent with their official duties," a euphemism for spying. The State Department says the pair were caught videotaping New York City landmarks and sensitive infrastructure, including a key subway tunnel."⁹⁵
- "According to a...reliable French investigator and author, Spanish authorities are now convinced that the Madrid massacre was organised by...Abu Musab al-Zarqawi. Zarqawi has also been credited for being one of the major organisers of the terror war against the Coalition in Iraq, and was named by Secretary of State Colin Powell in his presentation to the Security Council...as a key al Qaeda leader, with ties to the Saddam Hussein regime in Iraq...the German newspaper *Die Zeit*...revealed that Zarqawi wore several hats: He was a top officer of al Qaeda, and the leader of a terrorist group known as al Tawhid, and he lived and worked in Tehran. And just last week, the *Corriere della Sera* reported that

⁹³ *New York Daily News*, 17 July 2004, "Hijackers Had Ties With Iran, Says 9/11 Panel"

⁹⁴ *Associated Press*, 10 July 2004, "Editor of Russian Forbes Shot Dead"

⁹⁵ *Time Magazine*, 6 July 2004, "Suspect Snapshots"

Zarqawi's name had surfaced in recent investigations into al Qaeda's efforts to recruit radical Muslims in Italy for guerrilla and suicide attacks on Iraq. And, like the German documents, the Italian evidence led straight back to Tehran, whence Zarqawi had issued orders to his agents in Italy."⁹⁶



- “In an apparent rebuff to US calls on Lebanon and Syria to rein in the Hezbollah militant group, Iranian President Mohammed Khatami, addressing a mass rally in Beirut, Lebanon, vowed Iran’s continued support for the group, which is on the US State Department list of terrorist organisations. ‘The symbol for the survival of this country and its unity lies in this resistance (Hezbollah). All of Lebanon stood against methods used by the aggressive Israel. The legitimate resistance carried out by all (Lebanese) groups has made the victory a victory for all the people,’ Khatami said.”⁹⁷
- On 26 March 2004, “ Hamas politburo Head Khalid Meshaal...praised Iran for its [continued] support for the Palestinian Resistance Movement against the Zionist regime” as Iran’s Khatami “expanded” foreign relations with Hamas. ⁹⁸

⁹⁶ *National Review Online*, 29 March 2004, “Zarqawi, Getting Around”

⁹⁷ <http://www.harpazo.net/forzion/2003May14.html>

⁹⁸ *IRNA*, 26 March 2004, “ Hamas Leader Lauds Iran’s Support”

- In January 2002, Israeli naval commandos in the Red Sea seized a “Palestinian ship, Karine-A, with its cargo of over 50 tons of Iranian weapons and explosives, reveals an entirely new network of cooperation in Middle Eastern terrorism. The PLO-Iranian link will require a complete re-examination of the strategic landscape in the Middle East, particularly with respect to the intentions of the PLO's governing institution in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, the Palestinian Authority (PA), and the regional role of Iran.”⁹⁹ The ship’s captain, a Palestinian named Omar Akawi, confessed that “he was ordered to pick up the weapons by officials of the Palestinian Authority on Iranian territory.”¹⁰⁰
- There are still believed to be +200 al Qaeda operatives working in Iran, including bin Laden’s son. “Pakistani President Pervez Musharraf said in an interview during his Washington trip late last month that some al Qaeda operatives ‘certainly’ had relocated to Iran in the wake of the U.S.-led war in Afghanistan, although he could not say for certain who the fugitives were. ‘Al Qaeda is on the run, and they are transiting to all the neighbouring countries,’ Gen. Musharraf told editors and reporters at a luncheon June 26 [2003] at The Washington Times. “Certainly, they are transiting to Iran as well.”¹⁰¹

Iran has consistently and persistently deceived the international community in its pursuit of nuclear weaponry.

- Exile groups have successfully identified nuclear plants / facilities that Iran has kept hidden from nuclear authorities, for example the facility recently discovered in Natanz. On 24 March 2005, an Iranian exile has accused Tehran of secretly purifying uranium for use in nuclear weapons at a recently-constructed underground facility at a military complex called Parchin. ‘Iran has completed an underground tunnel-like facility in Parchin, which is now engaged in laser enrichment,’ said Alireza Jafarzadeh, an Iranian exile who has reported accurately in the past about hidden atomic facilities in Iran. ‘This underground site is camouflaged and built in an area of Parchin that deals with the chemical

⁹⁹ <http://www.jcpa.org/art/brief1-15.htm>

¹⁰⁰ http://cbsnewyork.com/sunedition/local_story_1132313713.html

¹⁰¹ *Washington Times*, 6 July 2003, “Al Qaeda Said to Have Migrated To Iran”

industry,' he told *Reuters* by telephone on Thursday from Washington, citing 'well-placed sources inside the Iranian regime.'¹⁰²

- Shortly before the exile's discovery, the Iranian regime "...rejected a request by U.N. nuclear inspectors to return to its Parchin military base, where Washington suspects Iran might have conducted tests linked to nuclear bomb-making, the U.N. atomic watchdog said."¹⁰³ Wonder why...
- The Islamic Republic has established a continual pattern of lies and deception regarding its nuclear ambitions. On 6 March 2005, Iran confirmed "that it initially developed its nuclear program in secret, going to the black market for material, and blaming its discretion on the U.S. sanctions and European restrictions that denied Iran access to advanced civilian nuclear technology. Iran now openly admits that it has already achieved proficiency in the full range of activities involved in enriching uranium - a technology that can be used to produce fuel for nuclear reactors or an atomic bomb. 'True. There was secrecy,' former president Hashemi Rafsanjani said Sunday."¹⁰⁴
- In February 2005, it was reported that "Iran [was] testing some parts of machines that can be used to make the fissile core of nuclear warheads, despite a pledge to freeze such activities...The revelations dealt a fresh blow to hopes Iran would scrap uranium enrichment."¹⁰⁵
- The German magazine *Der Spiegel* reported in November 2004 that "Iran is working on a secret nuclear programme for military purposes despite promising the European Union it would halt all activities related to uranium enrichment... The magazine said it had obtained documents from an unnamed intelligence agency showing that Iran had dug a secret tunnel near an Isfahan facility preparing raw uranium for enrichment, even though operations there had been stopped.

¹⁰² *Reuters*, 24 March 2005, "Iranian Exile Says Uranium Secretly Enriched"

¹⁰³ *Reuters*, 1 March 2005, "UN Says Iran Rejected Inspection of Military Base"

¹⁰⁴ *The Associated Press*, 6 March 2005, "Iran Admits Keeping Nuclear Program Secret"

¹⁰⁵ *The Associated Press*, 3 February 2005, "Iran testing centrifuge parts"

Iran, which has repeatedly denied trying to develop nuclear weapons, promised the European Union on Nov. 14 it would halt all activities related to uranium enrichment, a process that creates atomic fuel for power plants or weapons. *Der Spiegel*, in an advance release of a report due to appear on Monday, said the secret underground facility near Isfahan could soon be ready to produce large amounts of uranium hexafluoride gas (UF₆). Centrifuges that spin at supersonic speed can produce enriched uranium from UF₆.

“The magazine said that according to the intelligence documents, *Iran's Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei personally issued a directive at the start of October to build the secret tunnel.*”¹⁰⁶

- In one of the more unusual moves by the Foreign & Commonwealth Office, they drafted a plan in November 2004 whereby Britain would help their mullah compatriots in building a nuclear reactor. Indeed, *The Sunday Times* reported “Britain may help Iran build a nuclear reactor and supply it with other nuclear material under a controversial deal...The deal – discussed at talks that ended in Paris yesterday – would require Iran to abandon its own efforts to enrich uranium for six months and to stop other controversial work at its nuclear facilities. In return, provided the regime in Tehran meets the terms of the probationary period, British and other western European technicians will help to construct a light-water research reactor there. Work would start next summer...It would also be supplied with reactor fuel for the plant.”¹⁰⁷ Given Iran’s truthfulness in the past about its nuclear intentions, this seems like an overall rational policy (hard to say that with a straight face, isn’t it?).
- In June 2004, Western intelligence officials examined reports “...that Iran's Revolutionary Guards attempted to cover up a nuclear accident that occurred during the delivery of a secret shipment of weapons-grade uranium from North Korea. The accident allegedly caused Teheran's new £260 million international airport to be sealed off by Revolutionary Guard commanders within hours of its

¹⁰⁶ <http://www.signonsandiego.com/news/world/20041127-0711-nuclear-iran-germany.html>

¹⁰⁷ *The Sunday Times*, 7 November 2004, “Britain Offers Iran Nuclear Plant Aid”

official opening on May 9...Seven weeks later, the showpiece airport named after Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini, the leader of the 1979 Iranian revolution, is still closed. All commercial flights are required to use the capital's ageing Mehrabad complex.”¹⁰⁸

- *AFP* reported in May 2004 that “UN atomic energy inspectors see a pattern of radiation contamination in Iran which could indicate attempts to enrich uranium to bomb-grade level...The report...comes as International Atomic Energy Agency inspectors are completing months of investigations into US allegations that Iran is secretly developing nuclear weapons...Radioactive dust spreads in a uniform pattern but particles of highly enriched uranium have been found in specific sites, hinting that ‘someone brought material or equipment and then removed it.’ ”¹⁰⁹
- On 2 April 2004, *Reuters* reported “The U.N. atomic watchdog [has] found traces of bomb-grade uranium in Iran at sites other than the two already named...‘They found highly-enriched uranium at more sites than Kalaye and Natanz,’ a Western diplomat told *Reuters* on Friday on condition of anonymity. The diplomat did not specify how many sites, where they were or when the traces were found.”¹¹⁰
- On 1 April 2004, *The Guardian* reported “The British government made a tacit admission for the first time yesterday that its much-trumpeted diplomatic initiative to try to prevent Iran securing nuclear weapons may be in trouble.”¹¹¹
- Also on 1 April 2004, a piece in *The Washington Times* highlighted the Islamic Republic’s pattern of deception with regards to its nuclear plans:

“...a careful look at Iran's pattern of behavior suggests that it is only a matter of time until it tosses aside even the pretext of cooperation. In June, the IAEA issued a report confirming longstanding U.S. charges that Iran was secretly attempting to develop nuclear weapons. For the next few months, the agency

¹⁰⁸ *The Telegraph*, 27 June 2004, “Iran Covered Up Nuclear Spill”

¹⁰⁹ *AFP*, 14 May 2004, “UN Sees Signs Iran May Have Tried To Make Bomb-Grade Uranium”

¹¹⁰ *Reuters*, 2 April 2004, “More Bomb-Grade Uranium Found in Iran”

¹¹¹ *The Guardian*, 1 April 2004, “Iran’s nuclear facility erodes diplomatic victory”

lobbied unsuccessfully to persuade Iran to permit the agency's inspectors to make surprise visits to the country's nuclear facilities. By early September, even IAEA Director General Mohamed ElBaradei (who had been resisting pressure from Washington to declare Tehran in noncompliance with regulations governing the handling of nuclear materials) had finally lost patience. Mr. ElBaradei noted that, along with Iraq and North Korea, Iran 'has been giving the international community the runaround.' On Sept. 12, the IAEA gave Iran an Oct. 31 deadline to disprove the mounting body of evidence that it is developing nuclear weapons. Then, just days before the deadline, Tehran reached agreement with Britain, France and Germany to suspend uranium enrichment in exchange for promises from European countries to help it obtain nuclear technology for peaceful purposes.

"In November, the IAEA issued a 30-page report documenting Iran's deceptions about its nuclear program going back to the mid-1980s. Washington insisted that Iran's behavior be condemned and that the matter be referred to the U.N. Security Council. But Iran declared that it would not cooperate with the IAEA if this took place, and the IAEA backed down.

"In January, Iran brazenly announced it was building centrifuges in violation of its commitments to the Europeans. Then last month, IAEA inspectors announced that they had found traces of polonium, a radioactive substance that can help trigger a nuclear chain reaction. It was yet another item that Iran had failed to declare. Inspectors also discovered high-tech enrichment equipment on an Iranian military base – the first known link between the nuclear program and the Iranian military. More ominously, there have been reports that Tehran has been helping North Korea with its atomic weapons development efforts.

"In sum, when it comes to nuclear weapons, Iran's current behavior seems to be little more than a continuation of its policy over the last two decades: sustained cheating, occasionally interrupted by tactical retreats."¹¹²

¹¹² *The Washington Times*, 1 April 2004, "More Lies from Tehran"

- On 26 February 2004, the UN nuclear watchdog accused Iran of failing to answer several questions about its nuclear program despite Tehran giving what it called a “fair disclosure” last year in October.
- On 25 February 2004, UN nuclear agency inspectors uncovered further evidence of previously undisclosed nuclear experiments in Iran. They found traces of polonium, a radioactive element that can help trigger a nuclear chain reaction. Inspectors said that Tehran never mentioned working with polonium in past declarations of its nuclear activity.¹¹³
- On 19 February 2004, *USA Today* reported the discovery of still more bomb-making technology – this time, uranium enrichment centrifuges at a military base in east Tehran.
- On 12 February 2004, UN inspectors discovered that Iran hid blueprints for a powerful device to enrich uranium in an apparent breach of Tehran’s promise last year to disclose all of its nuclear activities. The discovery of the concealed blueprints for a centrifuge, which can be used to enrich uranium for...nuclear bombs, raised questions about whether Tehran also has bought designs for a nuclear weapon from black market sources.¹¹⁴

¹¹³ www.hearlad.ns.ca/stories/2004/02/25/fWorld195.raw.html

¹¹⁴ *Reuters*, 13 February 2003



So much for the joke-of-a-treaty in which Britain had a hand in creating during October 2003.

- On 21 January 2004, *The Daily Telegraph* reported that, “The Iranian undertaking, given three months ago, was hailed at the time as marking a new approach to the disarmament of rogue states through diplomacy rather than war, but Western officials said Tehran was still buying and assembling machines to enrich uranium. ‘The Iranians are definitely still out procuring equipment...This is clearly a breach. The goal is cessation of enrichment and we are moving in the opposite direction.’”¹¹⁵
- On 14 January 2004, *Reuters* reported that “Western diplomats have said Iran has continued to amass large amounts of uranium-enrichment centrifuge machinery, despite a promise to suspend all activities related to a technology critical for bomb-making.”¹¹⁶
- On 12 January 2004 retired Brig. Gen. Ephraim Sneh, chairman on the subcommittee on defence planning and policy in the Israeli parliament, said, “I believe in 2004 Iran will definitely reach the point of no return; that is, it would no longer need outside assistance to build the nuclear bomb.” Others say the point

¹¹⁵ *The Daily Telegraph*, 21 January 2004, “Diplomats Say Iran Breaking Nuclear Pledge”

¹¹⁶ *Reuters*, 12 January 2004, “Iran Has Yet to Agree on Nuclear Freeze with UN”

has already passed. Amin Tarzi, a Prague-based expert on the Middle East and an analyst with Radio Free Europe said, “Iranians have a full nuclear fuel cycle, and so they do not need to import uranium, and they have uranium enrichment facilities, and all they need is to weaponise warheads.”¹¹⁷

¹¹⁷ www.defensenews.com, 12 January 2004



Brothers in Arms

Despite all of the above examples, British officials at many levels within the administration have insisted on referring to the Islamic Republic of Iran as a “democracy.” Further, Britain’s economic relationship with Iran implies belief in the validity of the Iranian regime through its status as a crucial trading partner, ignoring the fact that its officials are undemocratically selected and that human rights abuses and the lack of personal freedoms are the decree of its leaders. Finally, British news agencies, including the BBC World Service, which is funded directly by the Foreign & Commonwealth Office, have time and time again ignored the human rights atrocities and violations against the Iranian peoples’ freedoms in their coverage of international news. Only recently have media organisations within Britain begun to scratch the surface of the true nightmare that is the lives of everyday Iranian citizens. This is too little, too late. It is truly a disgrace to Britain’s status as one of the pillars of democracy in the world that reporters such as John Simpson, who work for what is in essence a governmental organisation, have over time knowingly presented deceptive and misinformed pictures of the situation in Iran, and kept silent about the tens of thousands of innocent lives that have been lost since this bloody regime came to power in 1979.



Political Support



“If there’s anything else we can do for you, let me know! I can come back a sixth time, if you wish!”



Jack Straw, the UK’s Foreign Secretary, has travelled to Iran no less than 5 times since 11 September 2001, and has also met with the Iranian Foreign Minister and government representatives numerous times in London and places such as Davos, Switzerland – earning him the dubious distinction of the most visits ever from a UK Foreign Secretary to any Iranian regime. Under the banner of “critical engagement” he and the Foreign & Commonwealth Office have supposedly attempted, and most definitely failed, in achieving any improvements to the Iranian peoples’ human rights or freedoms of expression. The office does its case no favours when its Foreign Secretary does such foolish things as calling Iran a “democracy”¹¹⁸ – but perhaps it gets favours from its favourite mullahs? It causes one to wonder as to where the “critical” component of “engagement” has disappeared.

¹¹⁸ Jack Straw called Iran a “democracy” in April 2003; see *The Guardian*, 2 April 2003, “UK will not attack Syria or Iran”

Not to be outdone, Tony Blair expressed his affection for the Iranian regime on 6 February 2003 during Kamal Kharrazi's visit to London. Kharrazi characterised their visit as such: "I am very glad that I had this opportunity to visit London and I had very good discussions with my colleague and the Prime Minister, and we decided to expand our co-operation in different fields, especially in the economic area."¹¹⁹ That must be the only arena that really matters in the end, right Tony? Interesting that you want to increase your economic ties with a country that you recently admitted "...certainly does sponsor terrorism, there's no doubt about that at all."

Not only does the UK's closest ally, the United States, generally refuse to deal with the illegitimate Islamic Republic, but human rights groups around the world condemn the governing mullahs of Iran for the atrocities they continually commit against their own people. In fact, within Britain itself, a large portion of Parliament does not even agree with the Foreign & Commonwealth Office's continuing wooing of the Islamic Republic. For instance:

- On 6 February 2003, 80-plus MPs and Peers denounce UK visit by Tehran regime's Foreign Minister. "In a joint statement to Prime Minister Tony Blair... more than 80 members of both Houses of British Parliament denounced the visit to the UK by the Iranian regime's Foreign Minister. The joint statement said in part: 'It is an insult to the purpose of the coalition against international terrorism that Kamal Kharrazi, Foreign Minister of Iran, is meeting you in London this week.' The lawmakers added: 'There is no assistance the UK should seek or accept from a regime which uses terror against its own people and sponsors it abroad. Behind the <<constructive dialogue>> with the EU there is a worsening of human rights abuses by the mullahs' regime, with nearly 500 women and men hanged, often in public, or sentenced to death last year, and floggings and amputations'." Expressing concern that 'the recent regional developments might lead to further concessions to the regime in Iran,' the signatories called on the Prime Minister to 'ensure that the Iranian Foreign Minister is held to account for

¹¹⁹ http://www.ukinindia.com/press/background/note_207.asp

the appalling state of human rights and prevented from trying to demonise its legitimate opposition’.”¹²⁰

- On 18 July 2002, “More than 400 members of Parliament called Thursday for the government to adopt a firm policy against the present regime in Iran,” in direct contrast to the Foreign & Commonwealth Office’s policy of engagement.¹²¹
- On 28 June 2000, an absolute majority of the Commons called for “a firm policy against the ruling religious dictatorship in Iran. MPs...urge cancellation of Robin Cook’s Tehran visit. In an all-Party declaration, 335 members of the House of Commons emphasised that ‘President Khatami’s direct role in the suppression of the pro-democracy demonstrations proves that hope for democratic change is a mirage’.”¹²²



*Greetings, old boy!
Congratulations on a
successful twenty five years
of mutually profitable
relations!*



Even worse than Jack Straw’s worldwide visits of engagement with the mullahs is the fact that the Foreign & Commonwealth Office organized a trip for the Prince of Wales to Iran in February 2004. As the *Telegraph* rightly pointed out on this occasion: “Should the Government allow the Prince of Wales to be placed in the invidious position of calling upon President Khatami of Iran? Ministers must surely be aware that the visit might turn out to be used as propaganda by a theocratic regime that has been waging psychological warfare on the people since the Islamist Revolution of 1979.” Maybe everyone got it all wrong, and it was really just a courtesy call to congratulate Britain’s economic partners, the rogue regime of the Islamic Republic, on twenty-five years of prosperous and mutual success?

¹²⁰ Lord Corbett of Castle Vale Press Release, 6 June 2003, House of Lords, London, SPIA 0PW

¹²¹ *Associated Press Newswires*, 18 July 2002, “British MPs Join Iranian Opposition Group’s Call for Policy Against Iran”

¹²² <http://www.iranncrfac.org/>

Now, let me get this right. You have taken all of the money for the rebuilding of Bam and are giving to the mullahs to use as they please?

...And you've given us how many million £'s for how many innocent Iranian's lives over the last quarter century?



The article also highlighted that "...the greatest delusion concerns the efficacy of Mr Khatami as a reformer. Since coming to power in 1997, he has proved to be a great disappointment.... He stood by when clerical vigilantes murdered students during the riots of 1999; he was inert when 'hardliners' closed the newspapers in 2000; and he buckled under this year when Mr Khamenei refused to delay the irreparably flawed elections."¹²³

After the sham elections of 2004 in Iran, British Prime Minister Tony Blair said that the U.K. will continue to engage with Iran. "We engage for a reason: to make the world more secure, and to try and encourage a process of change in Iran."¹²⁴ Hmm. Make the world more secure.

So, legitimising the largest terrorist-sponsoring regime in the world is good for world security. Well, we must agree with the second point, though. The UK's policy of "critical engagement" has certainly encouraged a process of change in Iran: the people are poorer, there is higher unemployment, and as documented already, the Iranian people continue to be hanged, stoned and arrested without cause at higher rates than before Khatami came into power. Well put, Mr Blair, well put indeed.

Also interesting to note is the tiny amount of media attention and quick "brushing under the carpet" that very serious events in Iran have elicited in Britain. For example, on 21 November 2003, "A fire bomb was hurled at the British Embassy compound in central Tehran," which was "...the target for a number of attacks [this] year, including four shootings against embassy buildings in August and September following the arrest by Britain of a former Iranian diplomat wanted by Argentine authorities.... The British mission bore the brunt of protests in the in the run-up to the war in Iraq. A truck laden with fuel smashed into the front gate of the embassy

¹²³ *Telegraph*, 9 February 2004, "The Government's Royal Gift to the Ayatollahs"

¹²⁴ *The Associated Press*, 26 February 2004, "Blair Says Engagement With Iran to Continue Despite Vote"

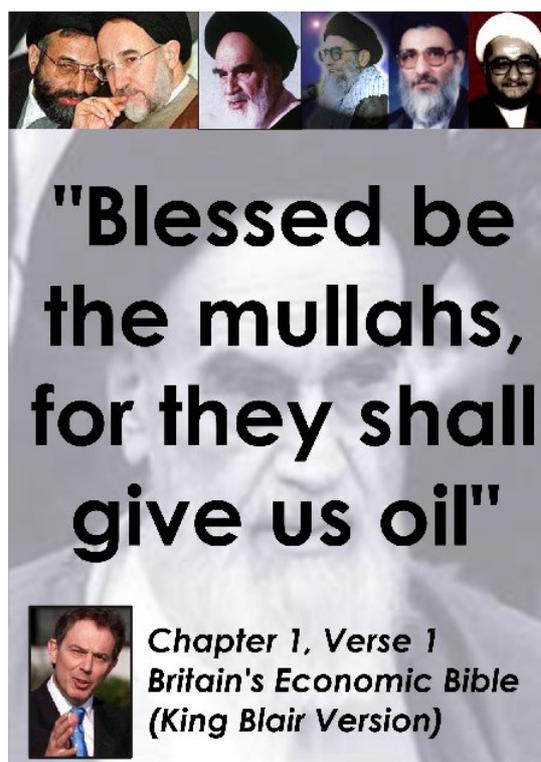
compound and a small homemade grenade was tossed over its walls. The truck driver was killed....”¹²⁵

These are very serious events that merit investigation and public awareness. However, they were never really reported on in broadcast news (with only a few mentions on major newswires) and the British government never broadly or publicly answered the question of why the embassy was attacked. This seems strange given that an event such as a group of “cavers” being held by Mexican authorities makes international headlines, yet when a British embassy in a highly strategic country in the world is repeatedly attacked, there is no interest from the media, but merely a knee-jerk reaction by the British authorities to keep quiet and let it disappear. Strange, unless there is something to hide, maybe?

On a final note, another event that received very little mainstream media attention (though it was reported by a few papers) was the letter written by Foreign Office Minister Baroness Symons to the husband of Culture Secretary Tessa Jowell in order to help him side-step the United States’ strict trade embargo against Iran. As *The Observer* reported on 9 January 2005, “Jowell’s husband lobbied Symons about the potentially lucrative deal to provide Iran with several British Aerospace jets after he sat next to her at a dinner party. Mills then went on to write to her, asking for help to push the deal through. At the time Straw and Symons were adamant that Mills did not receive any special treatment. However, the leaked letter from Symons, written on headed government notepaper, suggests that this was not the case.”¹²⁶ What? The Foreign & Commonwealth Office promoting a UK trade deal with Iran...that just couldn’t be could it. Read on and discover the truth about Britain’s economic relationship with the beloved mullahs.

¹²⁵ *Reuters*, 21 November 2003, “Fire bomb thrown at UK embassy in Iran, none hurt”

¹²⁶ *The Observer*, 9 January 2005, “Minister’s ‘Advice’ on Iran Jet Deal”



Economic Support

The British government is far less “critical” of Iran when it comes to increasing its already astonishingly large economic ties to the Islamic Republic, a regime that already reflects so well the values that Britain holds in high regard domestically.

- The Middle East Association (MEA) is an independent London based organization established in 1961 to promote trade and investments between the United Kingdom and the Middle East. An MEA trade delegation visited Iran from 21-26th of November 2004 with the mission of expanding trade relations.¹²⁷ The mission leader, Michael Thomas, has spent thirty years in the Middle East region involved in projects trading and shipping. In an interview with International Transportation Magazine on 24th November, Thomas voiced optimism that economic relations of Tehran and London will improve very soon...”

When asked what major changes he has seen in Iran’s trade relations with Britain recently, he said,

¹²⁷ [http://www.netiran.com/?fn=artd\(3364\)](http://www.netiran.com/?fn=artd(3364))

“Building of confidence. I feel that now the British companies are welcome. We got very generous reception here...Another change is that now the British businesses also feel confident about Iran...Iran wants to sell its product to Europe as well. We want to take advantage of cheap energy here and make investments and manufacture and sell products to Europe -- similar to Turkey. We're looking for real joint ventures. With Iran's raw material and the cheap energy, along with the transfer of technology, we can make great synergy.”

He was also asked: “Iran's Minister of Mines and Industries, Eshaq Jahangiri, visited Britain at the head of a 25 member trade delegation at the invitation of the British Trade Secretary, Patricia Hewitt. This was followed by your visit. What has been the outcome?”

His answer: “Mr. Jahangiri's visit to the U.K. was a huge success and it couldn't have come at a better time. As it happened, it coincided with the lifting of the cloud of the WMD problem because of the Paris Agreement. I had the pleasure of being introduced to the Minister who is extremely interested in our mission to Kerman. This visit has invigorated British interest in the mining sector. The result is that we have to visit Iran next year with a special mining delegation of members of the MEA. Whilst in Kerman, I was able to sign a [memorandum of understanding] on behalf of the MEA with the Kerman Chamber of Commerce, which demonstrates our solid intention to cooperate with businessmen in Kerman Province.”

So, what British institutions are representative at these types of conferences that the public hears nothing about? Speak on, Mr Thomas...

“The sectors that received the most interest were mining, education, financial services and banking. On the educational side, we are introducing British universities to their Iranian counterparts with a view to establish cooperation and exchange students. We have the Southampton University in our delegation for that purpose.

“In the financial sector, I was delighted to have three of Britain's leading banks, i.e. HSBC, Lloyds Bank and the Standard Chartered Bank. The banks are looking into trade and project finance and the Standard Chartered Bank is negotiating to open a branch in Kish.

“On the mining sector, I'm particularly interested in the downstream sector. The major multinational mining companies are quite capable of looking after themselves in terms of business development in Iran in the upstream sector. It is the smaller, but nevertheless important down stream companies that need support and encouragement - although those companies on my trade mission, involved in this sector, as soon as they visited Kerman they needed no more encouragement.”

Mr Thomas' group also visited Tehran in 2000, taking trips to Mashad (tourism), Shiraz (olive plantation), Mazandaran (orange concentrate factory) and Khuzistan. What was the result?

“Since then some major projects have been signed up as a result of my introductions, e.g. the electrical manufacturing sector and some other numerous smaller businesses have developed in the automotive and mining sector. At the moment we are waiting for the letter of credits to open for a large amount of money for technological machinery. Because of all these Opportunities I've made Iran a priority market in the Middle East. Iran is a fast developing market whereas other Middle Eastern markets are mainly mature markets and they don't have the population and the raw materials.”

- In December 2004, it was reported “Tehran-based National Iranian Gas Export Co. hired HSBC in October to advise on financing a \$2.7 billion project to export gas to Europe and Asia from 2008. In August, the bank joined Amsterdam-based ING Group NV and Japan's export credit bank in lending \$154 million to Iran's National Petrochemical Co. It's interesting to note that “London-based HSBC

Holdings Plc, which traces its roots in Iran to 1889...returned [to Iran] five years ago and has six employees in Tehran.”¹²⁸

- Earlier in December 2004, the press reported that “Trade incentives linked to Iran's nuclear pact open opportunities for new UK-Iranian business deals, especially in energy, Iranian and western political and industry sources said Monday...During an oil and gas conference in Tehran, Brian Wilson, special envoy for the U.K. government on overseas trade, said Iran and the U.K. could be on the threshold of forging strong ties in the energy business. In return for importing Iranian oil and gas to the U.K., Wilson told conference delegates, Britain would give Iran access to much needed technology. Relations between the UK and Iran in the energy sector are essential to the economies of both countries,” Wilson said. “It's an indication of the level of Britain's seriousness in developing a better relationship with Iran especially in energy,” he said. “There is a general belief in Iran [that] once this nuclear deal was signed then Britain and particularly foreign minister Jack Straw would help to boost business in all areas between the two countries.”¹²⁹
- Did you know that British businesses get incentives from Government to do business with Iran? On 15 November 2004, *IRNA* reported:

“Iran has become one of the most active markets for the British government's Export Credit Guarantee Department (ECGD) in recent years, according to its deputy chief executive John Weiss. But from the number of contracts and in terms of interest shown by British businesses, it is now the “ECGD's most active market,” Weiss told company representatives at an economic conference on Iran in London Wednesday.

“ECGD, which works to promote bilateral business for UK companies, has so largely offered credit for contracts with Iran's Oil and petrochemical sector.

¹²⁸ *Bloomberg*, 23 December 2004, “Iran Lures BNP, HSBC for \$50 Bln of Loans”

¹²⁹ *Dow Jones Newswire*, 6 December 2004, “Iranian Nuke Pact May Boost U.K. Energy Deals”

Facilities offered include either corporate risk or structured finance, which streamlines the procedure by no longer requiring sovereign guarantees from Iran.

“Among the most recent major contracts was Dlr 76m support in July for the UK content of Phases 9 and 10 of the South Pars development, which was worth Dlr 1.6 billion. Weiss said that Phases 9 and 10 represented "the largest export credit transaction ever in the Middle East" and involved five different government agencies providing support.

"It is a highly innovative arrangement and is a structure to form the template for future projects," he said, further emphasizing its importance. Outside the Oil sector, the deputy chief executive said that ECGD had also supported contracts for British companies in Iran's power industry, transport, waste water management, telecom and mining, where he said there was a "great potential" for UK businesses.

"To facilitate non-Oil and gas business, ECGD can consider business-backed Iran's Sepah, Saderat, Melli, Mellat and Tejerat banks," he said. He also announced that the Bank of Industry and Mine had been recently added to the list. With regard to future contracts with Iran, Weiss said that a further major development worth one billion dollars could be expected in relation to South Pars. There were also further downstream petrochemical and gas feed stock projects in the pipeline."¹³⁰

- Speaking in a keynote address at a London conference supported by the British government's Trade and Investment department, on "Fueling Economic Growth in Iran", Iran's Minister of Industries and Mines Es`haq Jahangiri...called for an expansion and diversification in the mutually beneficial trading relations between the UK and Iran. "Our bilateral relations, especially the mix and volume of bilateral trade, clearly demonstrate that the existing capacities have not been fully utilized and there is still much room for further expansion," Jahangiri said. He said that the trading relations of both countries have the "potential and the

¹³⁰ IRNA, 15 November 2004, "Iran is the Most Active Market for British ECGD"

possibility for further expansion. Parallel to our commercial relationships, we need to work together to expand out economic cooperation in mining and manufacturing sectors to give greater depth," the minister told the assembled delegates.

Jahangiri said that there were "many opportunities" for British businesses in the renovation and modernization of Iranian industries. This included exploration, mining, the food and pharmaceutical sectors, construction, the manufacture of automobile parts, the electrical and electronic industries as well as the oil and petrochemical sectors. The industries and mines minister cited that Iran had iron deposits of over 3 billion tons of which 18 million were extracted last year. He said there were also proven copper deposits of the same magnitude of which 15 million tons were mined last year. The country`s mineral wealth, in addition to oil and gas, also included chromate, lead, zinc, coal, gold, tin, manganese, ferrous oxide and tungsten, he told the conference. "In short, there are vast areas in the mining sector of Iran for commercial activities and we are confident investments in prospecting and extraction will be economically viable propositions," he said.

Earlier this month, it was announced that the Anglo-Irish Persian Gold company had secured a one year license to exploit for gold near the town of Takestan in north-west Iran. Investors were reported to have raised Dlr 540,000 to fund the first phase of the project. "At the present time, the conditions are right for cooperation between Iranian and British companies for projects in the littoral states of the Persian Gulf, Central Asia, the Caucuses, Afghanistan and Iraq," he said.

- "A delegation from the Mid Yorkshire Chamber of Commerce and Industry (MYCCI) arrived in Tehran on September 24 on a week-long visit as part of the Gateway Middle East initiative." The mission was financed in part by the European Regional Development Fund and is managed by MYCCI.

"... Iran is an important trading partner for the UK and we aim to assist UK companies to develop and strengthen their links with this exciting part of the world," said the project manager for the initiative, Chris Marshall.

"According to the report, the trade delegation is made up of a wide variety of industry sectors ranging from automotive assemblies to freight forwarding and logistics, innovative medical equipment to interior fabrics as well as Internet consultancy to cutting edge aviation communications software.

"We see Iran as an important commercial hot-spot for UK companies and we are proud of the progress that we have made in recent months. I am convinced that here are many opportunities for both countries to work together. We have no doubts that the mission will be instrumental in forging new links," added Marshal.¹³¹

- In September 2004, the Anglo-Dutch "Royal Dutch/Shell Group (RD) confirmed...that it has signed a project framework agreement with Iran, as part of its Persian liquefied natural gas joint venture with Spain's Repsol (REP)."¹³²
- *IRNA* reported on 1 June 2004 that "Two trade delegations arrived in Tehran on Friday and Sunday in order to conduct meetings with ranking Iranian officials, businessmen and industry leaders. According to a British embassy press release, the trade delegation from Wales, which arrived on Friday, will be in the country for five days. The visit is sponsored by Wales Trade International.

"Another mission, led by Lamont of Lerwick and Lord Phillips of Sudbury, arrived Sunday from the London-based British Iranian chamber of commerce. The mission will also be in Tehran for five days. During their visit, members of the mission aim to raise the profile of the United Kingdom's trade relations with Iran.

"Specifically, they aim to encourage closer commercial and economic relations between the two sides and further UK Foreign Direct Investments (FDIs) in Iran.

¹³¹ <http://www.payvand.com/news/04/sep/1233.html>

¹³² *Dow Jones Newswires*, 16 September 2004, "Shell Signs Preliminary LNG Deal With Iran"

The mission also hopes to provide further advice on how to increase Iranian exports to the United Kingdom.”

- On 29 April 2004, *Dow Jones* reported that “The U.K. has made an exception to its embargo on arms sales to Iran to ship aircraft components to the country, the government said Thursday.” Well, given all of their sponsorships of doing business with the mullahs, it’s not really that shocking anymore, is it?
- On 13 October 2003 *Asia Pulse* reported that: “Director General of the Department for the Foreign Investments in the Ministry of Economy and Finance Ahmad Mortazavi said here Friday that foreign investment in Iran has become 3.5 times higher now as compared with the past...He said [that the] UK with 12%...”¹³³ was the second largest foreign trading partner with Iran, after Italy.
- On 15 August 2003, the *Financial Times* reported that Shell, together with Total of France and British Petroleum, has shown interest in another oil field in south-western Iran.
- On 2 July 2003, the BBC reported that: “An analyst of the radio’s research and commentary group on European affairs, Mr Fathi, has said that a transformation is taking place in the relations between Iran and Britain. Commenting on a visit to London by Iran’s Economy and Finance Minister Tahmasb Mazaaheri, Fathi added: ‘The British do not wish to be left behind other European states in the expansion of ties with Iran.’...Our country’s finance minister [Tahmasb Mazaaheri], during a visit to London, has met and conferred with the British treasury minister [Gordon Brown] on ways of expanding economic relation between the two countries. He also attended a meeting entitled ‘Future of trade and investment in Iran’...[Fathi]: ‘The invitation to our country’s economy and finance minister and Mr Mazaheri’s meetings with the high-ranking economic, political and parliamentary officials of Britain demonstrate that contrary to the two countries’ disagreement in the diplomatic sphere, there is less discord between Iran and Britain in the economic field. The two sides stress the importance of

¹³³ *Asia Pulse*, 12 October 2003, “Foreign investment up in Iran”

expanding bilateral ties in this field’...’ It seems that this visit was positive in promoting bilateral economic relations and increasing [British] investment in our country. It must be said that at present the volume of trade between Iran and Britain \$690 million. The British export to Iran forms \$660 of this figure. Iran’s export to Britain is only \$25 million...It must be said on the whole that the visit of our country’s economic minister to Britain, which took place at the invitation of the British authorities, will create transformation in the two countries’ economic relations. It seems that the shortcomings and the slow progress of the ties in previous years will be overcome in the future and that trade and investment between the two sides will increase.”¹³⁴

- In May 2003 *The Observer* claimed that David Mills used his position as the husband of Culture Secretary Tessa Jowell to push for a US\$ 200 million aircraft sale to Iran that was in danger of falling foul of US sanctions. According to *The Observer*, Mills, who is a lawyer, is the principal adviser in setting up an Iranian trading group, called ILTC, with interests in oil, construction and aviation and was also a major shareholder of Iran’s Mahan Air. He was said to have helped arrange a US\$ 200 million deal with British Aerospace for Mahan to buy a fleet of 100-seat RJ146 passenger jets, but that it hit problems when it emerged that the planes had US Honeywell engines.
- In May 2003, “BG Group, a giant British exploration and development company, announced its signing of a framework agreement with Iran as a prelude to finalising a major gas deal. If realised the groundbreaking deal valued at US\$ 1.75 billion will grant a 25% stake to the British company in a major Iranian natural gas liquidification project in the Persian Gulf. Given the American government’s expressed willingness to destabilise Iran...the reported British government’s approval of the BG deal indicates the latter’s pursuit of its own national interests. When it comes to relations with Iran, such interests seem to be at odds with those of the American government...Against this background, BG’s agreement is at odds with the type of solidarity that the American government should expect from its British ally...The mentioned BG

¹³⁴ *BBC Monitoring Middle East*, 2 July 2003, “Analyst comments on ‘positive’ visit of Iran’s economy minister to UK”

spokeswoman acknowledged such risk when she referred to the British government's full knowledge of the agreement by saying: 'We have made all the necessary assessments on political risk and have kept the UK government informed at all times.'¹³⁵

- On 29 March 2003, the *Financial Times* reported that the Pentagon was "drawing up a blacklist of non-US companies investing in Iran's energy sector, with a possible view to barring them from US-awarded contracts in the reconstruction of neighbouring Iraq, according to private sector sources close to the US defence department. The companies on the draft list include several from countries with the US-led 'coalition of the willing', such as oil companies Shell from the UK..."¹³⁶
- On 16 January 2003 the *BBC* reported that, "Britain has given the go-ahead for the export to Iran of equipment that can be used in anti-personnel land mines. Export licenses for the 'dual-use' equipment were issued despite a 10-year-old unilateral arms embargo against Iran."¹³⁷
- On 7 February 2003, *Reuters* reported that, "Royal Dutch Shell said it was pleased with its oil investment in Iran and was continuing to talk about new projects, despite the U.S. describing the Islamic republic as part of an 'axis of evil.' Shell began pumping oil from Iran's Souroush field in November and hopes to pump 190,000 barrels per day from the US\$ 800 million project in two years."¹³⁸
- In November 2000, leading a ten-strong delegation to Iran, Mr. Nicholas Rinsford, British Minister of Housing, Planning and Construction, began negotiations with representatives of the Iranian companies at the ICCIM. He asserted that Iran is now at a suitable point of transition in its domestic political development and its relations with Europe. 'The general election this year verified that the Iranian people want their economic and political reconstruction to continue....I am very glad to be the first English minister to travel to Iran after 21 years for the

¹³⁵ www.atimes.com/atimes/middle_east/EE24Ak03.html

¹³⁶ *Financial Times*, 29 March 2003, "Pentagon to blacklist companies with Iran ties – reconstruction contractors"

¹³⁷ *BBC*, 16 January 2003, "UK sells Iran 'military' equipment"

¹³⁸ *Reuters*, 7 February 2002, "Shell backs Iran oil deals despite sanctions fear"

promotion of mutual co-operation,' he said contending that his visit indicated the British governments will for the expansion of economic and political relations with Iran. In a meeting with the ICCIM vice president Fereidun Entezari, the British minister assessed the grounds for bilateral trade co-operation as positive, saying that the British government is willing to broaden its trade ties with Iran.¹³⁹ Given the Iranian regimes spectacular human rights and individual freedoms record (as denoted above), this all seems rather reasonable.

- In 1999, Shell signed a US\$ 800 million deal to develop two oilfields, one of which began production in late 2001.
- On 28 June 1999, Deputy Oil Minister for International Affairs, Mehdi Hussein, told IRNA that a visiting British delegation has put forward proposals including transfer of modern technology and financial facilities to implement some projects in the oil, gas and petrochemical sectors. The British delegation comprising representatives from 29 British companies was the highest ranking trade-economic delegation to visit Iran since the 1979 Islamic "revolution." Meanwhile, a member of the British delegation, Alan Munro, told Iran Daily that Britain plans to promote mutual economic cooperation with Iran and sees Iran as an important trading and investment partner. Even if Iran is on the list of risky countries regarding investments, he said, "I believe that the risk of making investments in Iran is comparable with similar risks in other countries."¹⁴⁰ Yes, after all, who cares how many people the mullahs kill, let's take the Iranian peoples' money and let them suffer whatever our mullah colleagues fancy. Very sensible indeed Mr. Munro.
- On 25 September 1998 *Reuters* reported, "Britain's resumption of full diplomatic relations with Iran will smooth the way for British companies to compete for business in Iran's coveted oil and gas sector....British oil companies including British Petroleum, Royal/Dutch Shell, Lasmco and Enterprise have all expressed interest in the multi-billion dollar projects offered to international investors earlier this year by Iran. A British trade mission organised by the Department of Trade

¹³⁹ *ICCIM On Line*, "Britain Keen to Invest in Iran's Construction Sector"

¹⁴⁰ Farsinet, June 1999

and Industry and led by BP, centering on oil and related services, will travel to Tehran in October for a trade fair.”¹⁴¹

¹⁴¹ *Reuters*, 25 September 1998, “British-Iranian ties ease path for UK oil firms”



Media Support

One of the most shocking aspects regarding the plight of the Iranian people is that due to the global lack of media coverage, the only people who know about them are the Iranians who are the victims of the crimes and a select few outside of Iran who have the dedication and persistency to try to find out what is really going on. The little coverage that there is of events in Iran is nearly always biased and serves to support the flawed notion that there is a battle raging between “reformers” and “hardliners”, when it is perfectly apparent to anyone with a little knowledge that the so-called “reform” movement, headed by the ineffectual Khatami whose intentions are questionable at best, has no power to change anything in Iran unless it is approved by the real authorities, i.e. Khamenei or Rafsanjani, the Guardian or Expediency Councils, etc.

The British media is particularly supportive of the notion of the “reformists” versus “hardliners”, but even worse, has consistently misreported on major events, and has let the BBC’s main figureheads that deal with Iran – such as John Simpson, The BBC’s World Affairs Editor and Jim Muir, the BBC’s Tehran correspondent – make

sickly comments that call into question whether they actually believe that the people of Iran are human beings. As the BBC World Service is financially supported by the Foreign & Commonwealth Office¹⁴², who in 2002 provided the group with £187.9 million and in 2003 presented it with £201 million, the office should be held accountable for broadcasting programs where trusted journalistic figures so egregiously fail to report, or completely misreport, what is happening in Iran. Unfortunately, the propaganda spread by the BBC World Service is damning, and it infiltrates the homes of more than 1.5 million viewers in the UK alone¹⁴³, and nearly 150 million outside of the country – many of whom do not know better than to believe the opposite of what is being reported. The fact that the subjective and non-factual based opinions of figures such as John Simpson, who has from day one of the Iranian “revolution” attempted to portray a positive and friendly picture of the murderous mullahs are not called into account by the BBC or the government is shameful to say the least, since they have such a large affect on world opinion. It is a sad joke that the former BBC Chairman Gavyn Davies, in the Annual Review 2001/2 stated that: “The professionalism and courage of the World Service’s editorial teams...has ensured that high quality news and current affairs programming has been available to a global audience of around 150 million listeners on radio and online.”¹⁴⁴



¹⁴² http://www.bbc.co.uk/pressoffice/pressreleases/stories/2002/10_october/14/intergrated_international_news.shtml

- and -

http://www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/us/annual_review/2002/financial_income.shtml

¹⁴³ *BBC Press Office*, 21 July 2003, “BBC World Service achieves a record number of UK listeners”

¹⁴⁴ *BBC Press Office*, 17 July 2002, “Professionalism and Courage of BBC World Service Reporting Praised in Annual Review of 2001/2”

Below is a series of examples that paint a picture of how the British people, and almost 150 million foreign citizens, hear a tainted view of the events transpiring in Iran, and how the journalists who tell the stories seem to have ulterior motives and little sense of humanity:

- “On a chilly autumn morning, Jim Muir, BBC Tehran correspondent, was allowed to witness the execution of a young man accused of murdering a policeman.... Suddenly, in front of the...reporter the crane lifted the condemned man into the air. ‘For perhaps a minute, a slight tremor runs through his dangling legs, then all is still. *I have a moment of envy. He is suddenly at peace, and we are not.* On the ground beneath him, all that is left are the cheap, grubby orange plastic sandals he was wearing when he arrived. *Islamic justice has been done*’.”¹⁴⁵ So upon seeing the grotesque execution of a human being, Jim Muir feels envy for the man being hanged. What a world, what a World Service.

- On 28 December 2003 John Simpson commented about the Bam earthquake, which killed tens of thousands of innocent Iranians, saying, “*It is nearly as much an aesthetic and cultural disaster as a human one.*”¹⁴⁶ Mr Simpson obviously shares his colleague’s views on the value of Iranians’ lives. But he can’t stop himself from going on, and continues, “The Iranian government has had a great deal of experience in dealing with the aftermath of earthquakes, and the rescue operation is likely to be relatively efficient.” In fact, if Mr Simpson had carried out some real journalism, he would have found out what the rest of the world eventually did. The following are excerpts from an eyewitness who was in Bam in the days following the earthquake:
 - Even though it is mid-winter and temperatures have dropped to below freezing, the bodies begin to smell after just one day, causing speculation about some kind of further weapons testing close to the time of the earthquake.

¹⁴⁵ *Rouzegar-e-Now*, November 2002, No. 6

¹⁴⁶ *Telegraph*, 28 December 2003, “Now Iran must face the political aftershocks”

- There is no help from the government, the military or the police. The Land Cruisers and soldiers that were out in full force previously to intimidate people have disappeared.
- The government is saying that they have not been able to get supplies to people because the roads are blocked; yet the same 4x4 vehicles from the previous month would surely be powerful enough to get back into the city.
- The only people who are helping are those people who survived and volunteers from Kerman and other nearby towns and villages.
- There are people who do nothing but dig up bodies and drive them to Kerman so they can be buried; it is these people that bring the real news of what is happening in Bam.
- When the Basiji, the military or any official representatives are in the area, they do not stop to help to pull bodies out or carry them away; the most they do is give tea to those who are doing the digging. They all have blankets for themselves at night, but will not give them to the people who need them, they will only sell them if the price is right.
- The few people who have survived have nothing. At night, in freezing temperatures, there are no houses and no tents for them to stay in
- The first people to send aid were the British and the French and yet they were not seen helping in Bam as of 28th. Why not? No foreign helpers were seen on the streets; no dogs or helpers or doctors: they have only been seen on TV at the airport.
- Many people are trying to send food and supplies from Kerman and other cities and towns within the region, but they report that every shipment is being intercepted by so-called bandits along the road into

Bam who take everything. God only knows who these people are – some suspect they are paid by the mullahs – and what they do with the stolen goods.

- People claiming to be from official agencies in Tehran have been visiting the tents where the thousands of orphans are being kept. They are literally trying to buy the children from the adults that are with them, claiming that they will take them to Tehran to care for them. Many of these children are now completely missing and many sources have confirmed that different parts of their bodies are being sold (i.e. kidneys), and that many of the girls (and boys) are being sold as sex slaves both inside and outside the country.

- Khamenei visited Bam for an hour and had a smile on his face; he was met by angry mobs blaming him and his regime for the tragedy.



- The Iranian geological website that reports on earthquakes has said nothing about the one in Bam: the only technical information that can be found is on non-Iranian websites. However, the regime was given numerous advanced warnings and reports, and of course did done nothing with them.
- Mr Simpson might also find it interesting to read an article published in *The Guardian* on 2 April 2004, entitled “Three months after deadly quake, Bam survivors turn on Iranian government”, which explains that not only has the government been completely incompetent in doing anything substantive to rebuild Bam, but also the popular belief among many Iranians that “The government has received too much money. If they wanted to rebuild Bam, they could rebuild two Bams with that money.” Wonder what the mullahs are doing with all that cash? Something to benefit the people of Iran, surely.

- Also intriguing is Mr Simpson's views on other media channels; he said that he believed *Al-Jazeera* to be more objective than *Fox News* during Operation Iraqi Freedom. "I believe it," Simpson said.¹⁴⁷ This of course comes from a man whose "news" organisation claimed that American troops were nowhere to be seen at the Baghdad airport, even though another network was concurrently broadcasting pictures of US troops in the airport. More than that, the self-proclaimed "liberator" of Kabul, attacked American reporters as being "gonzo journalists" saying that they were "dysfunctional, grotesquely patriotic and embarrassing...[with] "hysterical, excitable reporting."¹⁴⁸ Maybe a little self-reflection would do him some good; after all, he was the one who was cheerleading against the coalition forces, of which his own country's soldiers were a part.

- Mr Simpson certainly lacks no sense of humour, for he surely must have been sarcastic when he said that if the US supports exiles to help spur change in Iran, "A blind eye will be turned to all sorts of excesses. And as a result Iran, which should be reforming itself and opening up in the way 80 per cent of its people want, *will sink back into extremism once again.*"¹⁴⁹ His sense of the sardonic is truly extraordinary, or does he really think that excesses and extremism do not currently exist in his paradise of the Islamic Republic of Iran?

- In fact, the BBC and other British media institutions contain a vault of laugh-out-loud Simpson materials. In just one article, there are so many good lines. Sterling work, Ayatollah Simpson, nice one:
 - "Visitors have always been treated like guests in Iran"¹⁵⁰; just ask Zahra Kazemi, Mr Simpson! Another astounding bit of comedy. In fact, this comedy might turn into a tragedy if you read what the doctor on-site at her examination discovered about the Islamic Republic's

¹⁴⁷ *Pressures and Censures*, "Discussions with John Simpson, writer as an international head of the BBC"

¹⁴⁸ *The Guardian*, 19 October 2002, "Simpson berates 'hysterical' US networks"

¹⁴⁹ *Telegraph: Simpson on Sunday*, 1 June 2003, "Why the Us military is not about to go charging into Iran"

¹⁵⁰ *The Guardian*, 1 February 1994, "Veil of Fears"

‘hospitality’ – including breaking her bones in prison, raping her and leaving her to the flies.

As *The Globe and Mail* of Canada reported: “ ‘Her entire body carried strange marks of violence,’ Dr. Azam said. ‘She had a big bruise on the right side of her forehead stretching down to the ear. The ear drum was intact, but the membrane in one of her ears had recently burst, and a loose blood vessel could be seen. Behind the head, on the left-hand side, was a big, loose swelling. Three deep scratches behind her neck looked like the result of nails digging into the flesh. The right shoulder was bruised, and on the left hand two fingers were broken. Three fingers had broken nails or no nails.’

“Dr. Azam's account of his examination, which he intends to describe at a press conference in Ottawa today, goes on to describe severe abdominal bruising, ‘stretching over the thigh down to the knees.’ Though male doctors in Iran are not allowed to carry out vaginal exams, Dr. Azam's emergency-room nurse thoroughly examined Ms. Kazemi and found the bruising to be the result of ‘a very brutal rape.’ The nurse told him that ‘the entire genital area had been damaged,’ Dr. Azam said.

“ ‘The backs of both legs where the skin had come off indicated flogging, five marks on one leg and seven on the other. The big toe on the left leg was crushed,’ he said.”¹⁵¹

- “...stoning for adultery, cutting off of hands for theft – they are hard to quantify but seem rare...”; stop it, Simpson, you’re killing us (no, not the Iranian people, your listeners in the rest of the world).
- “Over the years, journalists and politicians outside Iran have found they can make up whatever stories they like about it, without fear of

¹⁵¹ *The Globe and Mail*, 31 March 2005, “Doctor reveals what happened to Kazemi”

rebuttal.” This guy should really go on the road with this stuff – oh, that’s right he already has!

- And a more recent article is almost as good – you should really go through his life work, it’s truly amazing:
 - “Whatever Westerners may think about the way Iran is governed, it is not a dictatorship like its neighbour, Iraq, and *although I have sometimes mischievously listed Ayatollah Khomeini as one of the various dictators I have interviewed, it is unfair to his memory. Khomeini was never remotely a dictator...Khomeini himself retained the basic loyalty of most Iranians...Iran is, in fact a kind of looking-glass democracy, in which people can...genuinely express their opinions about their rulers...President Khatami himself, the man who has always enjoyed consistent public support....*¹⁵² Where does he get this stuff; it is classic, just classic. Maybe he should read some of the statistics presented in this document just to see how funny he really is.
 - In 1979, in the Air France aircraft on his return to Iran after many years of exile, *AFP* reported the following about Ayatollah Khomeini: “Throughout the flight home, Khomeini showed now emotion. To a journalist who asked him what he felt about this triumphant return from years of exile, he replied ‘nothing’.”¹⁵³ We don’t know about the Iranian people retaining their loyalty to him for the last 25 years, but Khomeini’s toadying little helper (Mr Simpson) certainly has.

¹⁵² *Telegraph: Simpson on Sunday*, 16 February 2003, “Iran joins the club with a risk management exercise”

¹⁵³ *AFP*, 27 January 1979

**Quick
quiz.**

**Can you
tell who
is who?**

**Hint:
One
is a
famous
mullah,
and one
is a
famous
support-
er of
mullahs.**



**No
wonder
John
calls Iran
a demo-
cracy and
says
Khomeini
was not a
dictator.**

**He's just
defending
his
'brother'
(from a
past
life?).**

- BBC World Service and its British media cohorts have always given a truly unique perspective to political riots that take place in Iran on a regular basis. For example, in October - November 2001 there were numerous and intense political riots where thousands of Iranians from all walks of life protested peacefully against the Islamic Republic of Iran. Yet the events were labelled “soccer riots” or “football riots” by the British media, and mostly all Western media outlets save for a few.
- On 24 October 2001, the BBC ran the headline “More than 1,000 young Iranians investigated after football riots,”¹⁵⁴ when in fact football was not at all the primary issue of the protesting, where political slogans of all sorts were being chanted (i.e. “Death to the Taleban, in Afghanistan, in Tehran”, “Death to Khamenei”), which were not reported. *The Guardian* ran a similar story that failed to cite any political connection with the riots: “The soccer trouble started in Tehran when Iran beat the United Arab Emirates in the first leg of their encounter last month. It turned nasty after the national team unexpectedly lost to Bahrein 1-3. Rumours circulated that the players had come under pressure from conservatives to throw

¹⁵⁴ *BBC Monitoring Newsfile*, 24 October 2001, “More than 1,000 young Iranians investigated after football riots”

the match so as to give no grounds for jubilation.”¹⁵⁵ And, not to be outdone, *Reuters* reported that, “3,800 detained in Iranian soccer riots...Iranian security forces detained about 800 people during angry rioting in the capital Tehran after Iran lost a key World Cup soccer qualifying match in Bahrain....”

The only way one could learn that the riots were political in nature at all was to read the *Financial Times* story (or a few other select pieces) that said the riots had a political element. For example, the *FT* wrote that “...it is clear that the tens of thousands of people who partied in the streets of Tehran until the early hours...for the third time within a week had more than sport on their minds...’This is nothing to do with soccer,’ exclaimed Reza, a young civil engineer...’We are here to express our feelings of anger. We want things to change’.”¹⁵⁶ But it seems that for some reason, some of the British media did not want viewers and listeners to know that there was really a battle for political change going on in Iran.

There was almost no broadcast media coverage of the riots, which by any logical point of view, should have made international headlines. Maybe it would look bad if the Iranian people were shown not to like the regime that Britain likes to engage with so much and so often?

Likewise, more recently, on 25 March 2005, “at least 6 people were killed...and more than 40 wounded”¹⁵⁷ after a World Cup qualification football match between Iran and Japan. There were reports that the large pictures of Khomeini and Khamenei at Azadi stadium in Tehran were severely damaged by fans who had thrown heavy objects at them in protest against the Islamic Republic. When television cameras unintentionally zoomed in on the images, it became clear that they were severely damaged. After the match, there were disturbances and riots, which had an obvious political component directed against the mullahs. Riot police were called in and violently tried to control the crowd. However, none of this was reported in British (or any Western) mainstream media – or if it was, it was just the scores and the facts of the deaths, without a hint of a political

¹⁵⁵ *The Guardian*, 10 November 2001

¹⁵⁶ *Financial Times*, 27 October 2001, “Soccer celebrations worry Iran’s hardliners – Street partying is an outlet for pent-up...”

¹⁵⁷ http://www.iran-press-service.com/ips/articles-2005/march-2005/sad_soccer_26305.shtml

element. One scholar noted this and wrote, “If [they] had been interested, [they] could have seen pictures of Iranian security forces closing in on the ‘fans,’ both inside the stadium and out on the streets, where women — who are barred from attending athletic events in the Islamic republic — were singled out for special brutality. And if [they] had checked some of the Iranian blogs, [they] could have discovered that demonstrations were going on all over the country, not just at the Azadi (‘Freedom’) Stadium. There really is no excuse for that sort of disinformation....”¹⁵⁸

In the post-9/11 environment, where there is a media frenzy to report on any disturbances to commercial airline schedules (i.e. radio and television reports of flights travelling from Europe to America that have had to be recalled or land early are plentiful), it is interesting to note that there was almost no mainstream media coverage in the UK about the largest disruption in recent memory on a European flight. On 10-11 March 2005, a group of approximately 80 Iranian dissidents staged a continuous 12-hour protest against the current Iranian regime by refusing to depart their Lufthansa flight from Frankfurt to Brussels. They demanded to meet with EU representatives to discuss issues such as the Islamic Republic’s human rights abuses and support of international terrorism. In an age where one comment by a has-been pop star (Yusuf Islam, aka Cat Stevens) can elicit such media attention and worldwide fervour, it is sickening that such a serious statement against the dictators of Tehran is only mentioned in passing by the UK’s print and web-based media (if at all), and could be found nowhere throughout the 12-hours on broadcast television news.

Maybe the BBC World Service would benefit from looking at the BBC’s own website and benchmarking themselves against the values they are meant to uphold: “Due impartiality lies at the heart of the BBC. All our programmes and services aim to be open-minded, fair and show a respect for truth. Being impartial also means showing our commitment to providing programmes which reflect the full range of our audiences’ interests, beliefs and perspectives.”¹⁵⁹ One assumes that the Iranian people’s desire for regime change, of which 85% of them support as shown in the

¹⁵⁸ *National Review*, 30 March 2005, “Sometimes soccer isn’t just soccer”

¹⁵⁹ http://www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/specials/1536_impartiality/

Iranian regime's own polls¹⁶⁰, doesn't factor into to the BBC World Service's "audiences' interests, beliefs and perspectives" as their journalists don't seem to value Iranian's lives as being as important as other peoples'.

In closing, it is also interesting to note that five years ago, in the aftermath of the Iranian student uprising, Tam Dalyel MP, the father of the Commons during a parliamentary debate blamed the riots on the "sweltering July heat of Iran, where tempers can be tinder dry."¹⁶¹

His comments caused considerable offence amongst Iranians, though surely Mr Simpson was smiling when he read the transcript.

¹⁶⁰ A government sponsored poll – which is likely to be biased in any case – held just before the February 2004 elections found that "than 85 percent of the electorate intends to boycott the parliamentary vote on February 20. Even President Muhammad Khatami said that, under such circumstances, the elections would lack legitimacy. *Jerusalem Post*, 1 February 2004, Opinion

¹⁶¹ Potkin Azarmehr, "Anti-British Feelings Reach Fever Pitch Amongst Iranians"

Conclusions

It has been proven that Britain has continued to improve its economic ties with Iran despite the outright failure of the Iranian regime to improve its human rights record and increase freedoms for the Iranian people. The policy of “critical engagement” has shown itself to be inappropriate and ineffectual in promoting positive change and democratisation in Iran, and has also not succeeded in discontinuing Iran’s development of its nuclear capabilities, or in stemming the international terrorism that Iran supports through a number of channels. Britain’s increasing engagement with the Iranian regime since 1997 puts a stamp of validity on Iran’s theocratic rulers that is not deserved, and can only be explained by the desire for further economic benefit.

The Foreign & Commonwealth Office should re-examine its policy of engagement with the rogue leaders of the Islamic Republic of Iran with the knowledge that they embody exactly the opposite of the principles of freedom for which Britain is known so well around the world. The office should realise, which it most likely does already, that continued support of the current Iranian government – through political acceptance, economic trade and incomplete and inaccurate media coverage – can only deter the Iranian peoples’ quest for freedom. We urge the office to listen to the Iranian people rather than the jingling sound of Britain’s pockets.

Appendices

**APPENDIX:
Photographs of the Islamic Republic of Iran's "Democracy"**

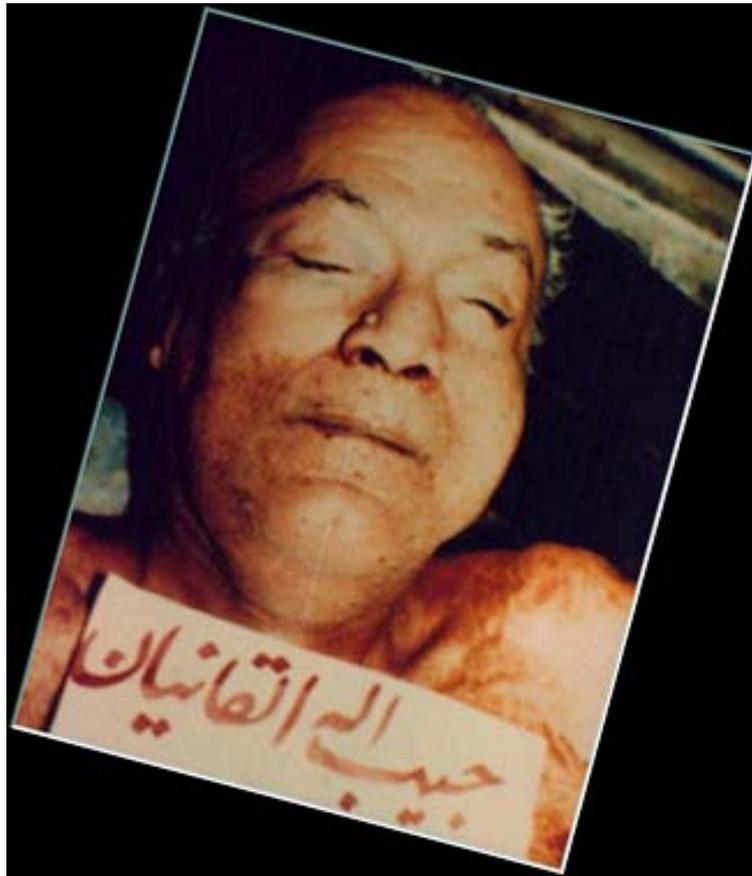
THE FRUITS OF KHOMEINI'S REVOLUTION – 1979



**APPENDIX:
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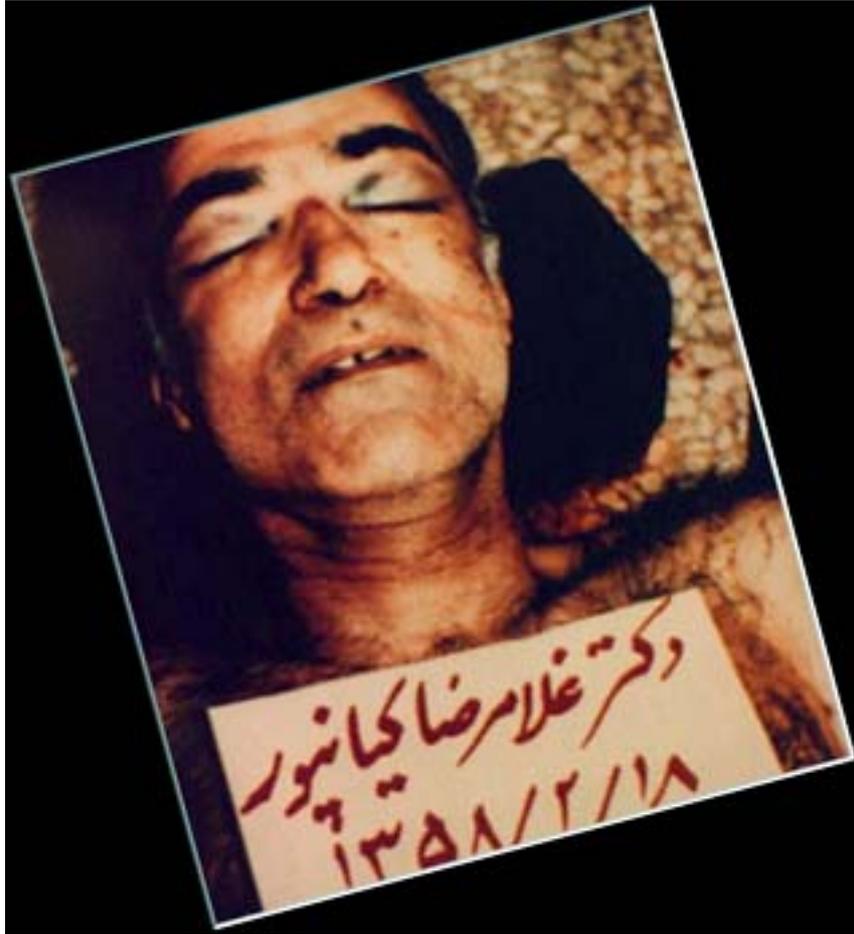
**APPENDIX:
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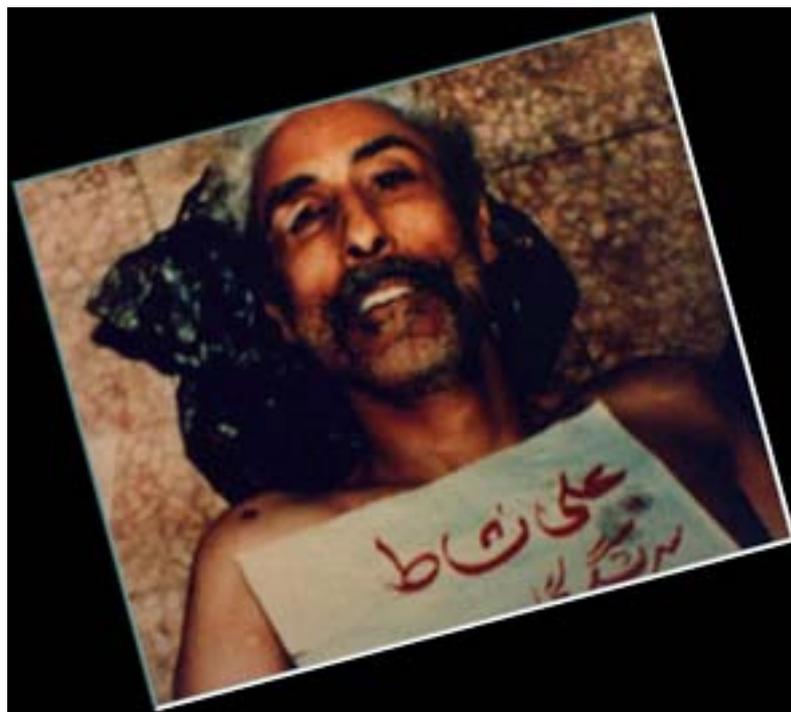
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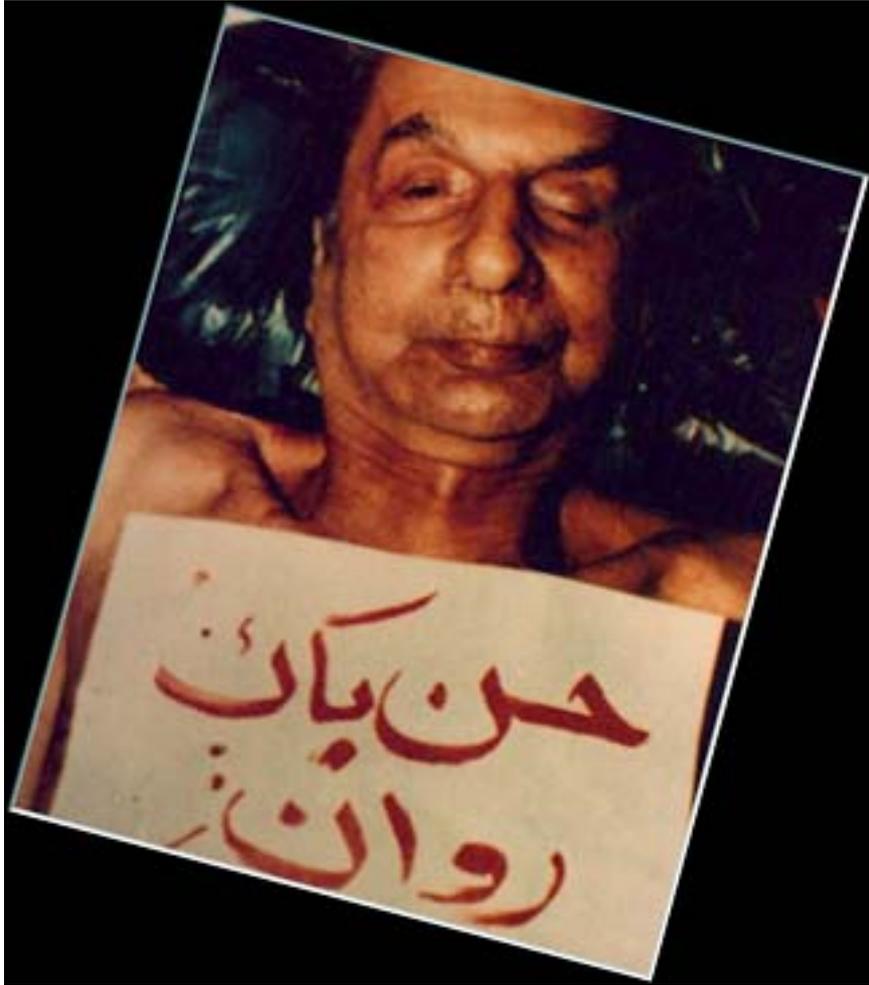
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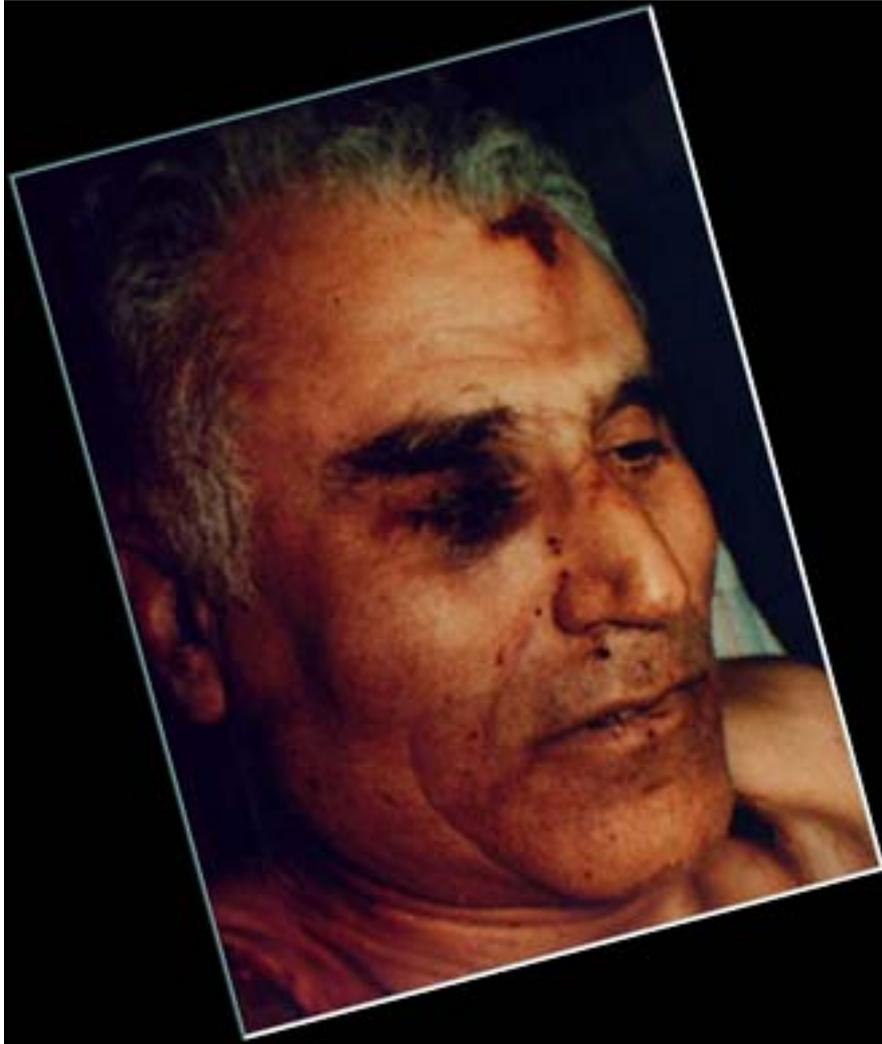
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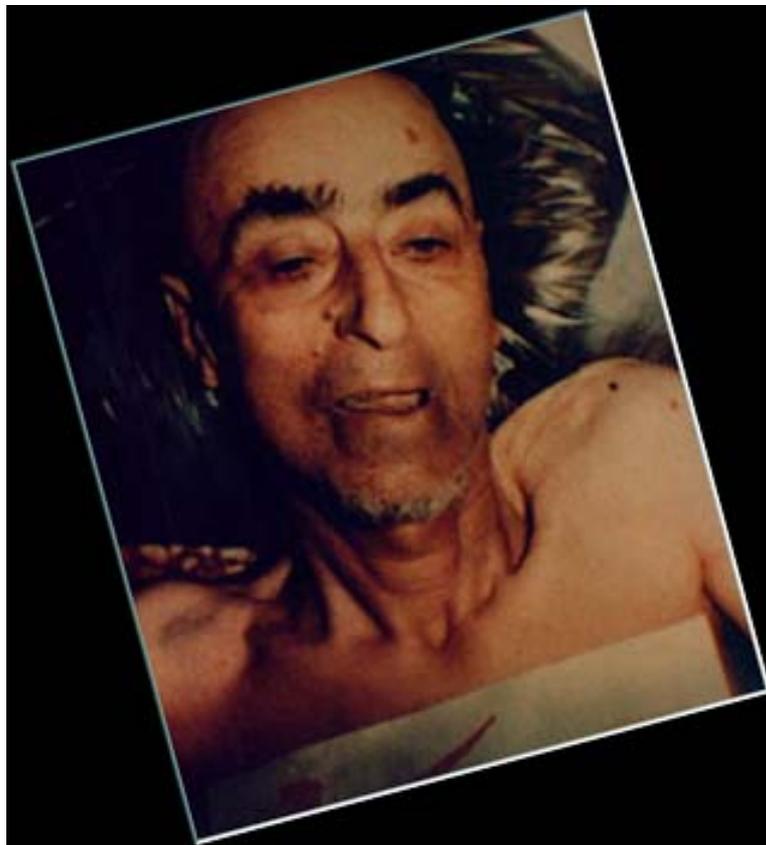
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THE FRUITS OF KHOMEINI'S REVOLUTION – NOW

Public Hangings



**APPENDIX:
Photographs of the Islamic Republic of Iran's "Democracy"**



**APPENDIX:
Photographs of the Islamic Republic of Iran's "Democracy"**



**APPENDIX:
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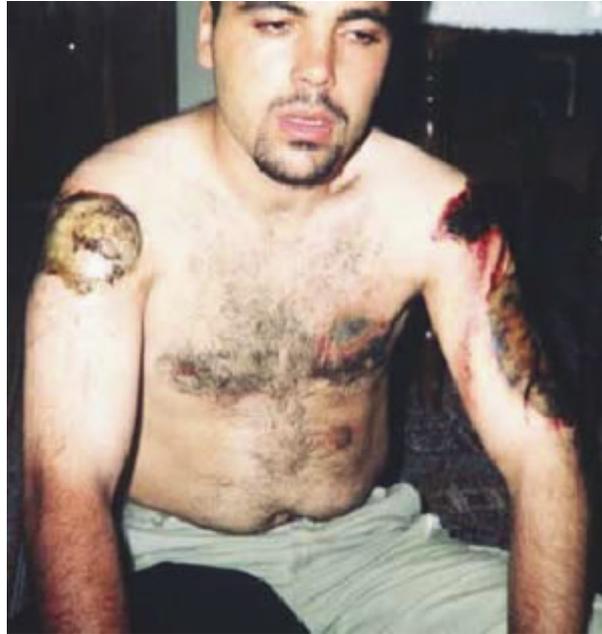


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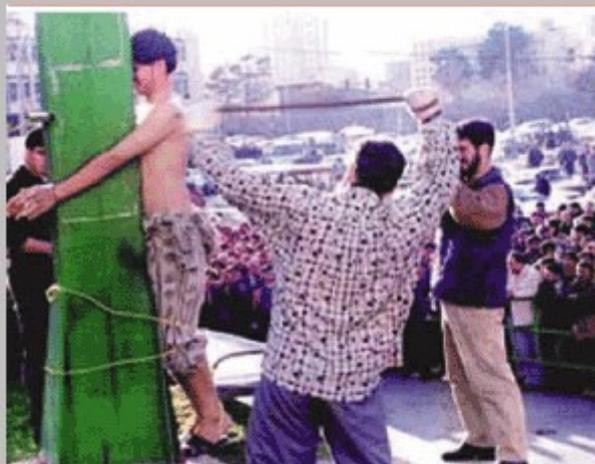
Floggings / Torture



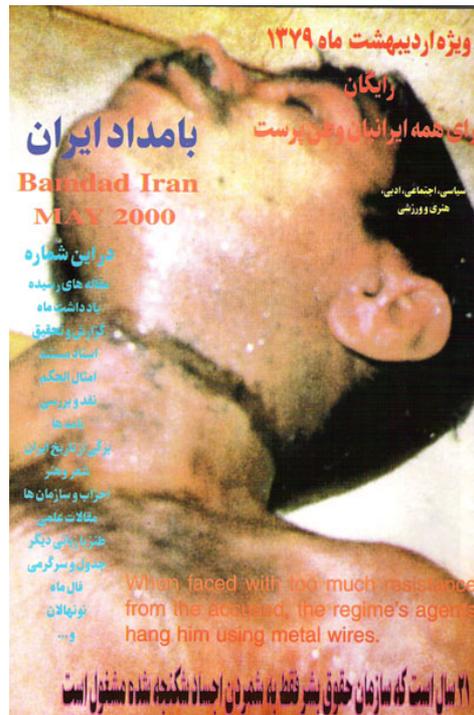
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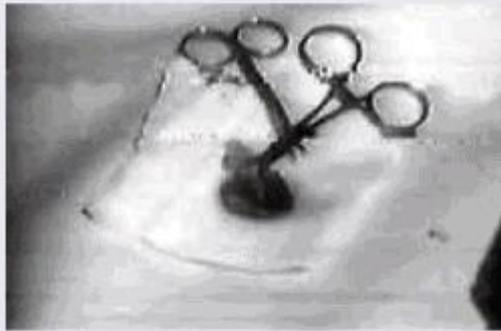


APPENDIX: Photographs of the Islamic Republic of Iran's "Democracy"

The Removal of Eyes

صحنه‌های از حدقه درآوردن چشم

یک پاسدار حکم را فرائت می‌کند: خدا یک کاری بکن. دکتر جان، تو را خدا یک کاری بکن.
... آقای سیدتقی طباطبایی، فرزند سیدرضا، محکوم به از ای خدا...
حدقه درآوردن چشمان می‌شود. این حکم بر اساس دادنامه محکوم: دکتر جان، ای خدا، ای خدا.
شماره ۱۹۱/۱/۵/۶۳، صادره توسط شعبه ۱۳۲ دادگاه کیفری فیلمبردار: دکتر دستت را ببر کنار.
تهران... و تنفیذ شده توسط شعبه ۱۶ دیوان عالی کشور، اجرا محکوم: دکتر، دارم بهت می‌گویم، من دیگر نمی‌بینم. چشمم را
می‌شود. منتهم محکوم به از حدقه درآوردن هر دو چشم شده بگذار بماند.
است. اگر منتهم جرم دیگری مرتکب نشده باشد، او بلافاصله فیلمبردار: دکتر دستت را ببر کنار.
بعد از اجرای حکم آزاد خواهد شد. رئیس محترم زندان دکتر: سیدتقی...
قصر، رئیس بهداری زندان، نماینده پزشکی قانونی و برادران یک پاسدار: نمامش کن، برود پی کارش.
پلیس قضایی می‌باید بر اجرای حکم نظارت داشته باشند. دکتر: پلکهایت را باز نگهدار.
همه اقدامات پزشکی لازم بعد از اجرای حکم باید صورت ضجه محکوم: ای خدا... ای خدا...
فیلمبردار: دکتر دستت جلوی دوربین است.
ضجه‌های محکوم: ای خدا، ای خدا، ای خدا، ای خدا، ای خدا، سرم داره می‌ترکه،
خدا، دکتر جان، تو را به خدا یک کاری بکن. ای خدا، تو را ای خدا، چشمم...



**APPENDIX:
Photographs of the Islamic Republic of Iran's "Democracy"**

Stoning to Death



**APPENDIX:
Photographs of the Islamic Republic of Iran's "Democracy"**

**Photographs of Student Dormitories Destroyed by the Regime
in June 1999 & the July 1999 Demonstrations that Followed**



**APPENDIX:
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**APPENDIX:
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Student Demonstrations against the Islamic Republic of Iran

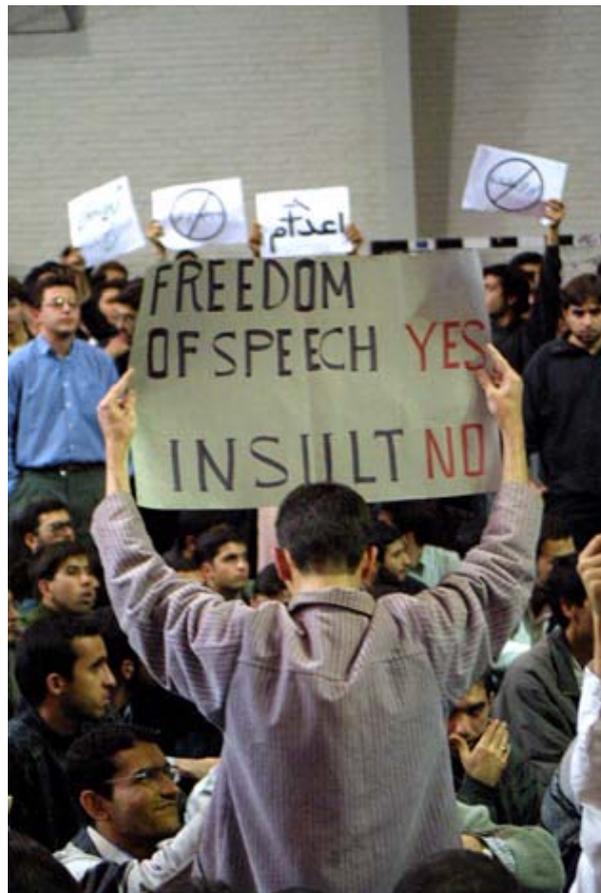
November 2002



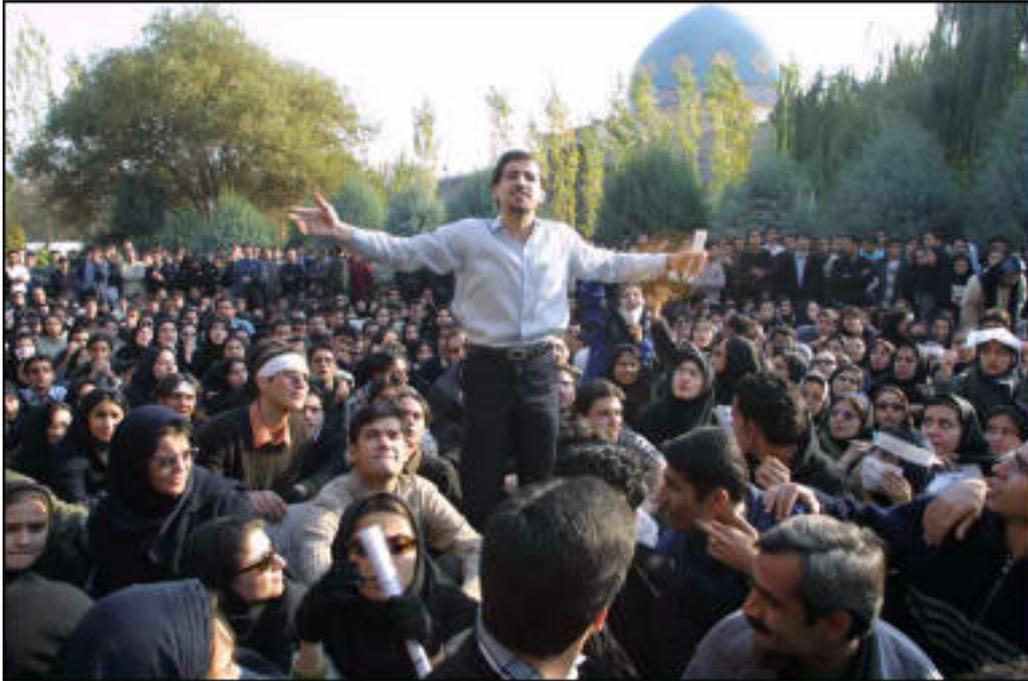
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More Demonstrations – December 2002



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**APPENDIX:
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More Demonstrations – July 2003



**APPENDIX:
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Other Recent Images of Demonstrations / Protests in Iran



**APPENDIX:
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