

## Trudeau cozies up to Iran's brutal regime



Canadian government officials were in Tehran last week, visiting the despotic tyrants that rule over the world's largest state sponsor of terrorism.

This is a drastic reversal in Canada's policy towards Iran.

In late 2011, the Iranian regime was teetering towards collapse under the weight of global sanctions and internal mismanagement.

This instability began to cause security concerns for Western diplomats on the ground.

The British embassy was raided by Iranian mercenaries, leading to the removal of most British and Canadian diplomatic personnel.

In the following months, then-prime minister Stephen Harper acted firmly and swiftly against the rogue regime.

Canada imposed harsh sanctions against Iranian banks and businesses, and eventually expelled Iranian officials, closed Iran's embassy in Ottawa and cut all diplomatic ties.

Canada considered Iran the largest threat to global peace and security.

Rightly so, given Iran's maniacal nuclear ambitions, its constant threats towards Israel and its open involvement in funding Islamist terrorist organizations.

At a time when the U.S., under the leadership of Barack Obama, the UN and the EU were all cozying up to Iran to negotiate the nuclear deal, Canada carved its own path and showed real leadership.

Obama's scheme to extend an olive branch to the mullahs in Iran came with great sacrifices, including the humanitarian crisis and civil war in Syria.

Obama agreed to turn a blind eye to the atrocities of Syrian dictator Bashar al-Assad, Iran's closest Arab ally, to gain favour with his Iranian counterparts.

He hoped the nuclear deal would lead to a more stable and moderate Iran.

Instead, the opposite has happened.

Emboldened by the deal, and the billions in cash that came along with it, Iran's belligerence has only worsened.

On the world stage, Iran continues to fund terrorism and prop up the Syrian dictator.

In blatant breach of the nuclear agreement, Iran has tested and advanced its ballistic missile program. (Predictably, Iran insists this did not violate the agreement.)

At home, Iran's human rights record has deteriorated. Religious persecution has intensified and executions have sky-rocketed.

The regime routinely kills gay men and puts children on death row.

The Trudeau government is aware of the Iranian regime's barbaric practices, but with eyes wide shut, naively insists that Canada can change Iran's behaviour.

'We believe (in) open and frank dialogue, especially when we disagree ... ' said Alex Lawrence, a Trudeau government spokesman.

Despite such spin, our recent history with Iran shows 'open and frank dialogue' doesn't work.

In 2003, Canadian photojournalist Zahra Kazemi was given permission to cover a student protest in Iran, even issued an Iranian press card.

Regardless, Kazemi was arrested and accused of being a spy.

Canada and Iran had diplomatic ties back then, but sadly, it didn't help.

Kazemi was detained at Iran's notorious Evin prison. There, she was raped, tortured and murdered by Iranian officials.

To this day, there has been no justice for this brutal murder of a Canadian.

Instead, Canada is once again being courted by a country led by Islamist fundamentalists who oppress their own people, destabilize neighbouring countries and threaten to destroy Israel - the world's only Jewish state and Canada's greatest ally in the region.

Trudeau is ignoring Iran's actions and simply hoping for the best. He's leading Canada down Obama's failed path of one-sided diplomacy with the world's most dangerous regime.

This column is based on a paper Malcolm wrote for the Center for a Secure Free Society, a DC-based think-tank.

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