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Tweet from Supreme Leader of Iran

by [DARLENE CASELLA](#)

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Once again, the nation tells the US, Britain, and those who seek to overthrow the Islamic Republic of Iran from abroad that "you've failed, and you will fail in the future, too."

— Khamenei.ir (@khamenei_ir) January 9, 2018

President Donald J. Trump described the Iran Nuclear Agreement as the "worst deal ever". He faces a January 13 deadline on how to proceed with the accord signed into law by President Obama. Speculation remains on whether the President will scrap the agreement. He discussed Iran's dangerous and destabilizing activities, including their support for terrorism. President Trump expresses concern for arrested protesters and speaks about longing by Iranian citizens to reclaim their history, culture and cooperation with their neighbors. A condensed Persian/Iranian history follows.

Cyrus the Great ruled Persia 500 years before the birth of Christ; in what is today the entire Middle East. These lands were eventually controlled by Persians, Mongols, and Ottomans. In the late 1700's Nader Shah took control of Persia. He was followed by a reign of brutal dynastic Qajar Monarchs.

Reza Khan (Shah) Pahlavi was an officer in the Cossack Brigade. He supported a coup d'état against the last Qajar Monarch, who was deposed in 1925. Reza Khan became Shah. The Pahlavi dynasty lasted until the 1979 Revolution. His policies of modernizing Iran were similar to his Turkish contemporary Kemal Ataturk.

Persians became Iranians in 1925, when Reza Shah asked the League of Nations to use the term Iran instead of Persia. Reza instituted law requesting everyone (except certain Shia consults) to wear western clothing, and encouraged women to discard the hijab. He banned headscarves and Chador, introduced economic, social, and political reforms, founded schools, universities, hospitals, and more. Reza prayed in the synagogue when he visited Jewish communities. Reforms opened new occupations to Iranian Jews and allowed them to leave the ghetto.

In World War II Iran was neutral. In spite of this, Great Britain and the Soviet Union invaded with massive assaults. Iran suffered humiliating defeats and surrendered. Allowing him to save face, the British requested that the Shah abdicate in favor of his son. Winston Churchill declared this a "Bridge of Victory".

Mohammad Reza Shah continued the policies of his father, and became an ally of the West. He extended voting rights to women, worked to eliminate illiteracy, and land reform. Celebrating 2,500 years of Persian monarchy the Shah invoked memories of ancient Persia, he replaced the Islamic calendar with a calendar that began with the foundations of Persia.

Mullahs were enraged, especially Ayatollah Khomeini. They fomented discontent which grew as socio economic changes benefited some and not others. The Mullahs focused on the youth with a populist ideology and strong Islamic principles. Widespread uprisings began in 1977/8.

The Ayatollah Khomeini expertly managed the media and the protests while exiled in France. He became prominent in the news, became the face of Shi'a, and was treated like "Mother Teresa" trying to do the best for his country. Khomeini inundated press and protestors with tapes and sermons from his chateau near Paris. He preached revolt and martyrdom.

Massive demonstrations were orchestrated. Oil refinery workers, and all major industries went on strike.

The Shah attempted to negotiate rather than use force. Arrested protestors were tried in civil court and quickly released. Protesters saw appeasement as weakness and demands grew for Khomeini's return and the establishment of an Islamic Republic.

Reza Shah left Iran in January 1979 for the USA, and then Egypt where he died in 1980. Ayatollah Khomeini returned to Iran. In April Iran became an Islamic Republic and a theocratic nation with Khomeini as the Supreme Leader. Shi'a laws were strengthened. Reforms of the Pahlavi Dynasty ended in the Islamic State of Iran.

A group of Muslim students supporting the Revolution captured the American Embassy holding 52 Americans for 444 days from November 1979 to January 1981. President Carter made failed rescue attempts. ARGO, a movie starring Ben Affleck, was made about it. Hostages were released on the day of President Reagan's inauguration.

Khomeini supported the hostage takers, summoned a fatwa for the murder of British Indian novelist Salman Rushdie, called the United States a Great Satan, and proclaimed democracy the equivalent of prostitution. Khomeini was named '[Man of the Year](#)' by TIME magazine.

With the death of Khomeini in 1989, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei became the new Supreme Leader. He continues Khomeini's policies and is the overseer of Iran's politics, parliament, president, Revolutionary Guards, military, police, Shi'a law, clerics, media, and on and on.

Significant citizen revolts in 1999 and the Green Party Revolution of 2009 with thousands of protesters demanding democratic rights; caused severe government crackdowns, penalties of death, public hangings, imprisonment, and torture.

Protests began in December 2017 in more than 80 Iranian cities. Grievances revolve around government corruption, squandering the nation's wealth with huge amounts of money for terrorist activities in Syria, Lebanon and Gaza; unemployment, gender equality, and forced wearing of hijab. Twenty-two reported as dead, and more than 3,700 have been arrested.

Some call for Crown Prince Reza Pahlavi (the Shah's son - who was attending university in the United States in 1979, and remains in the USA) to lead their movement. Speaking in Beverly Hills last week, the Prince proclaimed that it is not possible to succeed alone, protestors need help from the world.

White House on January 10 said it found "even more disturbing" reports that some of the arrested demonstrators were tortured or killed. The House of Representatives nearly unanimously adopted a resolution expressing support for "the people of Iran that are engaged in legitimate and peaceful protests against an oppressive, corrupt regime." Ambassador Nikki Haley seeks action at the UN saying "The world must not be silent in face of these political protests."

A deadline of the Nuclear Agreement approaches, and the world watches.

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Darlene Casella was, before her retirement, an English teacher, a stockbroker, and president/owner of a small corporation. She lives in La Quinta, California, and can be reached at darlenecasella@msn.com

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