

## Israel's complex relations with Iran

by **Thierry Meyssan** on [Voltaire Net](#)



**While the mullahs' rhetoric is clearly anti-Israeli, relations between the two countries are far more complex than one might think. There are in fact two opposing groups in Iran, one intent on doing business by all means with the rest of the world, while the other aims to liberate peoples from colonization. The former has never stopped doing business with Israel, while the latter fights against it, just as it fights against the imperialism of the United Kingdom and the United States.**

The conflict between Israel and Iran is distinct from that between the Arab population of Palestine and Jewish immigrants. Contrary to popular belief, the Persians have never been the enemy of the Jews. In fact, in ancient times, it was Cyrus the Great who enabled the Jews to escape from Babylon, where they had been held in slavery.

After the Second World War, when the United States seized the remnants of the British Empire, US President Dwight Eisenhower reorganized the Middle East. To dominate it, he appointed two regional powers to represent him: Iran and Israel. The two countries were both friends and rivals.

Eisenhower sent his Secretary of State, John Foster Dulles (brother of CIA Director Alan Dulles), to Syria to organize an Iranian-Syrian alliance to contain Israeli ambitions. A mutual defense treaty was signed between Damascus and Teheran on May 24, 1953. At the time, the Syrian

president, General Adil Chicakli, was pro-British and anti-French. This treaty still exists today (1).

At the same time, the UK came into conflict with Shah Reza Pahlevi's Prime Minister, Mohammad Mossadegh, who wanted to nationalize oil production. With the help of the United States, London organized a coloured revolution ("Operation Ajax" (2)). MI6 and the CIA paid thousands of people to demonstrate and overthrow Mossadegh. Responding to the "call" of his people, the sovereign changed his Prime Minister to Nazi general Fazlollah Zahedi (3).

Cooperation between the Shah's autocratic regime and Israel began in 1956 with the construction of the Elan-Ashkelon pipeline. Above all, in 1957, Mossad sent a team of "revisionist Zionists" (4), led by Yitzak Shamir, to set up the dreaded SAVAK political police (5).

In 1956, to seize the Suez Canal, which Egypt wanted to nationalize, the declining colonial powers, the United Kingdom and France, enlisted the help of the colonial state of Israel. After this operation, the France of socialist Guy Mollet thanked Israel by secretly sharing its atomic research with it. This research continued unbeknownst to the United States.

However, when the U.S. became convinced that Tel Aviv was heading for the bomb, it made sure to give it to Iran too. In 1974, French President Valéry Giscard d'Estaing brought Iran into the Eurodif consortium. It undertook to supply it with enriched uranium and to train its scientists. Two years later, US President Gerald Ford authorized Iran to pursue its own bomb.

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While the Western media had always portrayed the Shah of Iran as a sovereign who respected human rights, they began to prepare public opinion for the revolution when Imam Khomeini took refuge in Paris. On December 19, 1978, TF1 suddenly discovered the practice of torture by the SAVAK.

In 1978, the United States took a dim view of Shah Reza Pahlevi's military ambitions, which threatened Israeli power, and decided to impose a new Prime Minister with a new policy. Zbigniew Brzezinski, President Jimmy Carter's security advisor, decided to rely on the Shiite clergy, some of whose assets had just been nationalized by the Shah (the "White Revolution"). In his view, Ayatollah Rouhollah Khomeini, whose preaching was circulated on audiocassettes throughout the country, had the authority to become the monarch's Prime Minister. Despite the opposition of Secretary of State Cyrus Vance, he organized his exile to the Paris region, where he stayed for four months before being flown to Tehran by Air France on a special plane. The United States had persuaded the Shah that they were in control of the situation, and only intended to fight his opposition. They had even asked the Savak to assassinate the philosopher Ali Shariati (a personal friend of Frantz Fanon and Jean-Paul Sartre) in London, so that his ant colonialist ideas would not interfere with their scenario. The Shah had agreed to take a leave of absence while Washington sorted out the problem at home.

However, on the day of his return, February 1, 1979, a crowd of one million people acclaimed the Ayatollah. From the airport, he made his way to the cemetery where 800 Iranian victims

of political repression had just been buried. To the astonishment of Westerners, he delivered a violently anti-imperialist speech. There was no longer any question of a revolution within the Persian Empire, but of the establishment of an Islamic Republic.



At the Behesht-e Zahra cemetery, Ayatollah Khomeini apostrophized the army, calling on them to liberate the country from the Anglo-Saxons. The man the CIA took for a doddering preacher was in reality a tribune who inflamed the crowds and convinced everyone that they each could change the world.

Israel immediately seized the Iranian half of the Eilat-Ashkelon pipeline. A long dispute ensued, which was only secretly settled much later.

Khomeini questioned the recognition of Israel as a colonial state, had the premises of its embassy seized and handed them over to the Palestine Liberation Organization.

In 1985, Robert McFarlane, Security Advisor to US President Ronald Reagan, planned to deliver arms to Nicaragua's counter-revolutionaries, the Contras, without the knowledge of Congress. To this end, he first approached Israeli Prime Minister Shimon Peres. The two men agreed that it was not possible to involve a revolutionary Arab state like Libya, but perhaps Iran. Through the intermediary of MP Hassan Rohani (future President of Iran), they contacted the President

of the Iranian Assembly, the hodjatoleslam Hashemi Rafsanjani. Rafsanjani agreed to buy weapons to fight the Iraqi aggression, and to transfer some of them to the Contras. Thanks to this deal, Rafsanjani, already a large landowner, became the richest man in his country (6).

In 1988, Iraq used chemical weapons of mass destruction against the Iranian army and population. The result was a huge number of cripples. Even today, the threshold of tolerance to air pollution is very low in Iran. Often, the state issues an alert and the city of Teheran has to be evacuated for several days. I remember my friend, the great journalist Nader Talebzadeh, who, interviewing me on television, suddenly left the set, coughed up his lungs and was hospitalized. Responding to the suffering of his people, Ayatollah Rouhollah Khomeini declared weapons of mass destruction in general to be contrary to his vision of Islam. Since then, Iran has ceased its nuclear, biological and chemical military research. This ethical decision made the war last a little longer.

In 1992, Hashemi Rafsanjani, now a professional arms dealer and President of Iran, organized secret exchanges with President Carlos Menem's Argentina. Now publicly collaborating with the United States, he sent troops to fight under NATO orders in Bosnia-Herzegovina. He also supplied Argentine arms to the Bosnians. Officially, he did not question Khomeini's anti-colonialist vision of the world, but supported the Bosnian president, Alija Izetbegović. Israeli military personnel also took part in the operations.

The Iran-Argentina arms trade was interrupted by Israel, which organized the attack on its own embassy in Buenos-Aires (1992), followed by the attack on AMIA (1994) (7) and finally the assassination of Argentine President Carlos Menem's son, Carlitos (1995) (8).

In 2001, Washington abandoned its policy of balance in the Middle East. Gone were the ties between Israel and Iran (1953-79), Israel and Iraq (1979-91) and Israel and Saudi Arabia (1991-2001). The Pentagon intended to sow chaos throughout the "wider Middle East" (excluding Israel), i.e. from Afghanistan to Morocco (9). Those who had chosen this new strategy had pulled out all the stops to impose it: the September 11th attacks.

In 2003, a former Guardian of the Revolution, Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, became President of Iran. He reversed the policies of his predecessors and returned to the ideals of Ayatollah Rouhollah Khomeini. He never ceased to clash with the religious authorities, and even with the Supreme Leader. He industrialized his country, built social housing and tried to help the Shiite populations of the Middle East to find their own independence. Questioning the unspoken alliance with Israel in 2005, he explained that the State of Israel would disappear like Apartheid South Africa. Reuters falsified his words, crediting him with announcing the destruction of the Israeli people (10).

In 2006, he organized a conference on the Holocaust in Teheran. His aim was not to deny the truth, but on the contrary to show that the State of Israel was not reparation for Nazi crimes, but a British colonial project. Israel then asserted that it is anti-Semitic, which it absolutely is not.

At the same time, Israel launched a worldwide press campaign claiming that Iran had resumed

its military nuclear program. This was based on the fact that President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad had launched a vast civilian nuclear program. Indeed, he intended to discover another way of producing energy, through nuclear fusion rather than fission as in atomic bombs. At the time, Iran was planning to help the Third World develop by escaping Western control of hydrocarbons. A very long battle in international institutions began for Iran (11). In addition to Iran's pseudo-military nuclear program, Israel began to denounce Iran's pseudo-imperialism in Iraq.

The agreement concluded in secret on March 2, 2008 in Baghdad between Admiral William Fallon, Commander of U.S. Forces for the Middle East (CentCom), and President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad was broken by U.S. Vice President Dick Cheney. The US military intended to pacify Iraq with Iran, not against it (12). But Dick Cheney, who had been involved in the September 11th attacks, would not budge from the Rumsfeld/Cebrowski doctrine. That's why he launched a colour revolution during Mahmoud Ahmadinejad's second election (13).



On September 23, 2010, at the United Nations, President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad called for an international inquiry into the attacks of September 11, 2001, causing panic in the White House.

The situation changed again in 2013. U.S. President Barack Obama wanted to put an end to the

Rumsfeld/Cebrowski doctrine, which would require decades and millions of deaths before there would be any hope of a return on investment. He therefore planned to renew ties with the Iranian personalities who took part in the Iran–Contra affair, in other words, with Hashemi Rafsanjani's team. He began secret contacts in Oman (14). In the end, his interlocutors (15) promised to prevent Ahmaninedjad's team from fielding a candidate in the next presidential election, so that Hassan Rohani could win. Simultaneously, in August, Barack Obama withdrew from Syria, where he claimed to have drawn a red line, leaving his French partner, François Hollande, alone with his warmongering.

As soon as he was elected, Hassan Rohani once again abandoned the ideals of Imam Rouhollah Khomeiny and began negotiating the sale of Iranian oil to the Europeans. Bribes were paid by Austria. On the other hand, the Islamic judiciary arrested and sentenced, one after the other, all the collaborators of former president Ahmadinejad. His vice-president, Hamid Beghaie, was arrested on a secret charge, tried behind closed doors and sentenced to 15 years' imprisonment (16).

President Rohani's cabinet then proposed the creation of a Shiite federation with the various Shiite communities in Yemen, Iraq, Syria and Lebanon, in short, the restoration of the Persian Empire. At the same time, the 5+1 negotiations began in Geneva. Within a few days, an agreement was reached. A first document was presented on November 24, 2013. The Chinese and Russian ministers, Wang Yi and Sergey Lavrov, declared that the agreement was easy to draft because all parties knew that Iran does not have, nor seek to have, an atomic bomb. A long year of silence followed, with the initial text not signed until July 14, 2015.

A little later, in 2016, Hassan Rohani concluded a discreet agreement with Israel to settle the Eifat–Ashkelon pipeline dispute. In 2018, the Knesset discreetly passed a law punishing any publication about the pipeline's owners with 15 years' imprisonment.



General Qassem Soleimani, symbol of Iran's anti-imperialist revolution.

The new American president, Donald Trump, realized that he could not be cordial with his counterpart, Hassan Rohani. In the eyes of everyone, and especially the Iranians, their country is the unwavering enemy of the United States. So, on May 8, 2018, he tore up the nuclear agreement without warning. Washington and Tehran played this comedy as they did with Reagan and Rafsanjani: officially, they hate each other, in private, they do business. The Iranians, who continue to tighten their belts, discovered with amazement on social networks the incredible standard of living of their leaders and their families.

The two groups that have been at loggerheads for half a century in Iran – international businessmen and anti-imperialist fighters – are now crystallizing around President Hassan Rohani and General Qassem Soleimani. The latter promoted an alternative: the "Axis of Resistance". In the name of the Revolutionary Guards Corps, he armed and trained foreign Shiite groups, not to federate them, but to give them the means to achieve independence. From Ansar Allah (Yemen) to Hezbollah (Lebanon), each group would be responsible for itself, coordinating with others but refusing orders from Tehran. The men trained by Soleimani won victories against Daesh, against some of their own governments and against the West. He himself became

the most popular man in the Middle East. Officially, he is not involved in politics, but his speeches inflame the Arab and Persian populations. If he stood for election, he would surely be elected president. The veterans of the Iran-Contra affair then decided to eliminate him. On January 3, 2020, he was assassinated at Baghdad airport by a US guided missile strike. President Donald Trump claimed responsibility for the operation, but the local consensus was that it had been conceived in Tel Aviv. The Iranian president, Ebrahim Raisi, could be elected without difficulty.

The Israeli attack on the Iranian consulate in Damascus should not be interpreted as directed against President Ebrahim Raisi's team, but against the Revolutionary Guards.

## notes

1. 1. Syria and the United States , David W. Lesch, Westview (1992).
2. 2. Presidents' Secret Wars: CIA and Pentagon Covert Operations Since World War II, John Prados, W. Morrow (1986).
3. 3. Zahedi was arrested by the British in 1942 for his Nazi views. He was interned in Mandatory Palestine. The Iranian Nazi Party was reorganized when he became Prime Minister. Originally, the Aryans (now called Indo-Europeans) were the Persian people.
4. 4. "Revisionist Zionists" are Jewish fascists, disciples of Zeev Vladimir Jabotinsky, allies of Mussolini.
5. 5. [SAVAK: A Feared and Pervasive Force](#) , Richard T. Sale, Washington Post, May 9, 1977. Debacle: The American Failure in Iran . Michael Ledeen, Vintage (1982).
6. 6. The Iran-Contra Scandal : The Declassified History , Peter Kornbluh & Malcolm Byrne, National Security Archive Document (1993). Veil : The Secret Wars of the CIA, 1981-1987 . Bob Woodward, Simon and Schuster (19887).
7. 7. [Les falsifications autour de l'attentat contre l'AMIA et la "piste des 3 États"](#), par José Petrosino, Traduction Maria Poumier, Réseau Voltaire, 19 avril 2024.
8. 8. [Los vínculos entre el atentado a la AMIA y la muerte de Carlitos Menem](#) , Christian Sanz, Tribuna de Periodistas, 16 de febrero de 2013. [Secretos del día que mataron a Carlitos Menem](#) , Christian Sanz, Tribuna de Periodistas, 13 de marzo de 2013.
9. 9. [The Rumsfeld/Cebrowski doctrine](#), by Thierry Meyssan, Translation Roger Lagassé, Voltaire Network, 25 May 2021.
10. 10. [Reuters participates in a propaganda campaign against Iran](#) , Voltaire Network, 23 November 2005.
11. 11. [Who's afraid of Iran's civilian nuclear programme?](#) , by Thierry Meyssan, Voltaire Network, 27 July 2010.
12. 12. [The resignation of Admiral Fallon will provoke renewed fighting in Iraq](#) , by Thierry Meyssan, Voltaire Network, 15 March 2008.
13. 13. [The CIA and the Iranian experiment](#) , [Why should I look down on the Iranian people's choice?](#), [Color revolution fails in Iran](#) , by Thierry Meyssan, Voltaire Network, 19, 23 and 27 June 2009. [url=article160676.html]Iranian Elections: The "Stolen Elections" Hoax[/url], by James Petras , Voltaire Network, 19 June 2009.
14. 14. [Will Washington entrust the Arab world to Riyadh and Tehran?](#) , by Thierry Meyssan, Voltaire Network, 25 November 2014.
15. 15. In previous articles, I attributed this decision to the Supreme Guide, Ayatollah Ali



Khamenei. This interpretation has been contested by all my Iranian friends, yet none has offered me an alternative version.

16. 16. [Former President Ahmadinejad's vice president: Sentenced to 15 years in jail following a secret trial](#) , Translation Anoosha Boralessa, Voltaire Network, 30 March 2018.