

Who Is Destabilizing the Middle East?

By: Kayhan Int'l Staff Writer

For those who cannot wait, the answer is those who turned Afghanistan, Iraq, Syria, Yemen and Libya into failed states.

Silly how there are still some politicians and "pundits" in the West that claim otherwise.

For instance, addressing the 53rd session of the Munich Security Conference in Germany, U.S. Vice President Mike Pence claimed the nuclear deal between Tehran and the world powers has given Iran "additional resources" to "destabilize" the region.

He further accused Iran of being "the state sponsor of terrorism," and added, "Let me be clear again. Under President Trump, the United States will be fully committed to insuring that Iran never obtains a nuclear weapon capable of threatening our countries, our allies in the region, especially Israel."

It doesn't take a strategic mind to debunk this latest anti-Iran myth, as the peaceful nature of the nuclear program has been emphasized by the International Atomic Energy Agency time and again, even before the nuclear deal was clinched with the world powers in 2015.

Less we forget, it was also Trump who himself called former President Barack Obama the creator of ISIL terrorist group, now wreaking havoc in Syria, Iraq, and Libya. Mind you, it was also the CIA that "admittedly" trained ISIL forces in Jordan in 2012 in order to affect regime change in Damascus and "contain Iran."

Clearly, all these criminal moves and programs were destined to destabilize the heartlands of the Muslim world, radicalize more Muslims, and spawn further terrorist attacks across the globe. The irony about the U.S.-led coalition against the terrorist group of ISIL is that every single member in some way or another also contributed to the creation of the very terrorist group they are now allegedly fighting against in Iraq and Syria!

Just what the agenda is should be fairly obvious: Increased surveillance power, increased police power, increased military power and presence in the Persian Gulf, and a thoroughgoing support for continued war against Islam and its beliefs - instead of support for military withdrawal and peace, and rolling back the bogus "war on terror" which is in fact "war on Islam."

Nor is that all. White supremacists and opportunistic politicians are busy administering a familiar dose of nationalism and anti-Muslim hatred in all interactions with the public, linking the presence of Muslims to the Nazi occupation of Europe and blaming them for everything that has gone wrong with their failing economies.

At the forefront of this Western-wide nationalist resurgence and Muslim hatred, revenge attacks are being carried out against Muslim immigrants and refugees under the pretext of defending "our freedom" and "legitimate worries about Islamic militancy."

This is not surprising. This is the nature of the new U.S. administration and Western politics that reflexively support the ongoing "war on Islam," Muslim ban, and immigration restrictions, with a helping hand from the media and terror proxy forces.

What we are witnessing in the United States and Europe amid Muslim ban and Iranophobia campaign is the prelude to what can really be described as nothing other than pouring more fuel on the flames of Islamophobia, regime-change wars and occupations, arms race, sectarian warfare and chaos. The warmongers and regime changers are free to use fake news and blame Iran for the current chaos. But they are wrong to assume they can escape the truth and the harsh judgement of history.

Minister of Roads Survives Impeachment Vote

TEHRAN (Dispatches) -- Iran's Minister of Roads and Urban Development Abbas Akhondi on Sunday was reinstated after securing a vote of confidence from lawmakers who impeached him over a number of road and rail accidents.

for the second time since he took office in August 2013 after he survived an impeachment motion in October 2015.

As many as 74 MPs voted for his impeachment, while 176 lawmakers voted against it and five others abstained.

Akhondi appeared in parliament

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Khuzestan Struggles to Return to Normal



The iconic bridge on Karoun River is hardly visible in a haze of dust, with power grid workers attending to a transmission line in Ahvaz.

TEHRAN (Press TV) -- Iran's oil-rich Khuzestan province is struggling to emerge from back-to-back power outages which have severely disrupted life and led to expressions of discontent with local authorities and the government.

For quite a while, the province has been reeling from sandstorms which are said to originate in Iraq and Saudi Arabia but a combination of events recently have brought Khuzestan to the brink of virtual collapse.

Heavy rains have washed filaments of dust and sand into power transmission equipment,

leading to long outages. Water supplies are not unscathed, crippling life in the provincial capital Ahvaz and other cities.

The critical situation has sparked a chorus of commiseration among many Iranians, who have directed their criticism at the administration of President Hassan Rouhani.

On Saturday, Rouhani attended an emergency session of the Crisis Management Center in Tehran where he tasked his deputy Es'haq Jahangiri, Interior Minister Abdolreza Rahmani-Fazli and Khuzestan Governor Gholamreza Shariati with

resolving the crisis at the earliest.

The president tried to soothe anger among locals, hailing them for their "patience". Rouhani said the problem is a formidable one which has to be addressed outside Iran's borders.

"Right after the failures, the government tried to take all possible measure to reduce damage by sending concerned ministers to the province and mobilizing all its facilities," the president said, referring to power outages and water cuts.

He also expressed sympathy with those affected and assured

'U.S., Zionists Behind Anti-Iran Draft Resolution'

TEHRAN (Dispatches) -- Tehran says Sweden's plans to submit the UN a draft resolution on Iran's human rights record is in line with a U.S. and Israeli-led campaign aimed at promoting Iranophobia.

"The U.S. and the Tel Aviv regime along with several of their allies have presented joint draft resolutions against Iran to the UN Human Rights Council in Geneva due to a negative atmosphere against our country, aimed at creating a wave of Iranophobia since around seven years ago," said Foreign Ministry spokesman Bahram Qassemi.

The remarks came after Sweden unveiled plans to introduce a UN draft resolution on Iran's human rights record on March 10.

Qassemi condemned the planned move and stressed that such actions are unfair, false, and are out of touch with the realities in the Islamic Republic of Iran.

The Islamic Republic of Iran has already denounced "political manipulation" of human rights by Western countries against the world's independent nations.

"Such moves are made while most of these countries have simply shut their eyes to the killing of innocent people in Yemen, Syria, Iraq, and the atrocities of the regional supporters of terrorism," the spokesman added, slamming West's double-standard approach to human rights issues.

Qassemi emphasized that Sweden's anti-Iran draft resolution had nothing to do with a recent trip of Swedish Prime Minister Stefan Lofven to Tehran earlier

in the month.

Canada Court Order

Qassemi also rejected a recent ruling issued by Canada's Ontario Superior Court of Justice against Iran, saying the verdict violates international law.

"This ruling contravenes the basic principles of the legal impunity of governments and their assets, and is unacceptable," he said on Sunday.

Justice Glenn Hainey ruled on February 8 that the Islamic Republic had to pay \$300,000 in legal costs to those who claim to be victims of Iranian support for resistance groups.

The plaintiffs had sought compensation in the Ontario court under Canada's Justice for Victims of Terrorism Act. The verdict has given Iran 30 days to pay the sum.

Qassemi said the Islamic Republic has already conveyed its expression of formal protest to the Canadian government and reserved the right to take political and legal measures in that regard.

In June 2016, the same court ordered \$13 million in non-diplomatic Iranian assets to be given to three groups of plaintiffs.

The decision was similar to U.S. Supreme Court's ruling in April 2016 to hand over \$2 billion in Iran's frozen assets to American families of those killed in the 1983 bombing of U.S. Marine Corps barracks in Beirut and other attacks.

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The Holy Qur'an

They desire to put out the light of Allah with their mouths, and Allah will not consent save to perfect His light, though the unbelievers are averse

The Holy Qur'an (9.32)

PRAYER TIMINGS

| | |
|------------------------|-------|
| Noon (Zohr) | 12:18 |
| Evening (Maghreb) | 18:07 |
| Dawn (Fajr) "Tomorrow" | 05:22 |
| Sunrise "Tomorrow" | 06:47 |

local people that the government was determined to address the root cause of the problems and deal with environmental issues.

Minister of Agriculture Mahmoud Hoojati said the government plans to carry out plantation on 30,000-40,000 hectares of land in Khuzestan in a bid to contain the formation of dust storms.

Energy Minister Hamid Chitchian also visited water and electricity facilities in Ahvaz, pledging that his office was doing its best to resolve the problems as soon as possible.

Chitchian said power transmission lines have to be washed and dusted across the board and necessary measures taken to prevent similar incidents from happening in the future.

Press Digest

Economic Resistance

KAYHAN: The biggest problem for the Rouhani administration is that some of his own cabinet members have no faith in economic resistance. What else can you expect from these people? They keep telling us that the way out of the current economic stagnation is not economic resistance. Those who believe in economic resistance, likewise, are not up to the job either. Long story short, Rouhani has no economic team of experts in his administration.

Past Mistakes

RESALAT: Historians always say, 'problems were there and could have been resolved, but politicians decided to continue the same wrong policy and in the end they paid a heavy price.' This is so true now that those behind the 2009 post-elections unrest have brought up the subject matter of national reconciliation. As if they were repeating the same thing that 'let's do this and see what happens.' Their new rhetoric is something close to this. They refuse to own their past mistakes.

Trump's Threats

AFTAB: Commanders of Iranian armed forces say they are ready for any type of confrontation with the United States. In their words, foreign threats against Iran will yield no results. Trump's latest rhetoric of sanctions and military confrontation should never be taken seriously. He himself said he wanted to stop America's wars and instead focus on improving his country's economy and public welfare system. He was always against spending too much money on America's wars and aggressions.

Labour Law

HAMSHAHI: There are many laws that have been ratified to resolve the problems in the workplace. The problem is we are yet to see anything tangible happening in the sector. Five years ago, a law was passed at the parliament to fix the workplace problems and remove any barriers in the way of creating new job opportunities. This is yet to be the case. There are no new jobs, much less new factories, to be had. Worse still, no one seems to take any responsibility for it in the government.