

Congressional Briefing Uncovers Iran's Covert Operations

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PARIS, FRANCE, November 17, 2023 /EINPresswire.com/ -- The [National Council of Resistance of Iran \(NCRI\)](#) Foreign Affairs Committee in an article wrote that on Tuesday, November 14, 2023, Capitol Hill hosted a pivotal Congressional briefing, aimed at delving into Iran's covert influence operations both abroad (including in the United States) and within the nation, strategically crafted to fortify the survival of the terrorist regime ruling in Tehran.



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Former Assistant Secretary of State for Political-Military Affairs, Ambassador Lincoln Bloomfield, Jr., and Professor Ivan Sascha Sheehan, Associate Dean of the College of Public Affairs at The University of Baltimore, spearheaded this critical discussion. Together, they presented their landmark report, titled "IRAN: The Ayatollah's Hidden Hand."

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NCRI

The Congressional briefing sought to unravel the intricacies of Iran's covert strategies, offering a nuanced understanding of its external influence endeavors and internal maneuvers aimed at preserving the current regime.

As one of the distinguished speakers to address the briefing, US Representative Tom McClintock stated, "I've seen how the Iranian regime has attempted to influence American public opinion by

spreading false narratives, covering up atrocities, and winning major concessions from both the Obama and Biden administrations. And we've now seen the results. Riots in the streets of major cities around the world and billions of dollars being released to the mullahs of Iran to fund their terror operations around the world."

"It's important that we understand how the Iranian dictatorship has been able to manipulate the media, how it has insinuated itself into academia, and how it has ingratiated itself with governments that frankly ought to know better."

"We know the effectiveness of the National Council of Resistance because of the Iranian disinformation campaign that's been turned against it. In order to counter efforts to undermine the Iranian freedom movement, we must first understand their tactics, and that's the purpose of today's panel."

US House Representative Randy Weber also emphasized the urgency of addressing the threat posed by the Iranian regime and its influence in Europe and the US. Representative Weber criticizes the State Department for being too soft on the regime, advocating for a shift in focus toward opposition parties like the [People's Mojahedin Organization of Iran \(PMOI/MEK\)](#).

He argued against remaining stuck in a time warp of 1979, emphasizing the need to recognize the evolving geopolitical landscape. Weber contended that Tehran manipulates tensions with opposition parties to maintain power.



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During this briefing, Ambassador Bloomfield highlighted the role of the Iranian regime's deception machinery in fueling the current global crisis, particularly the ongoing Middle East conflict. Mr. Bloomfield pointed out that in 40 years, the Tehran regime has not only perpetuated a barrage of falsehoods and propaganda while suppressing its own people but has also invested significantly in resources abroad, including foreign capitals like Washington, D.C., to influence narratives.

Amb. Bloomfield said, "The Iranian regime has always lied when confronted with its crimes. They lied to the UN envoy who tried to investigate the 1988 massacre. They lied about the nuclear program when European and American negotiators after it was divulged by people in this room, by the way, that there was a secret enrichment program in 2002, negotiations began. The Iranians later bragged about lying to the negotiators. The regime pressed foreign capitals to suppress the MEK, to label them as terrorists. The United States government did so in 1997 as a political gesture. We've heard over and over again, there was never any iota of terrorism by the MEK, and there were four major court cases that demonstrated that."

Citing Tehran's need for regional warmongering, Amb. Bloomfield added, "For the regime, the only pillar keeping it in power is this fiction that they still have a revolution, that they're still headed for Quds, for Jerusalem. This is all they have left. How do you keep the foot soldiers of the Revolutionary Guards, the Quds Force, the MOIS, the Justice Ministry, how do you keep them loyal?"



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Amb. Bloomfield questioned the credibility of the information coming from Washington regarding the October 7 attacks. He expressed skepticism about the idea that the Iranian regime's Supreme Leader had no prior knowledge of the attack, especially considering the presence of militia leaders in Tehran the week before. Additionally, he cast doubt on the regime's Foreign Minister Amir-Abdollahian's lack of awareness, given his past association with the Quds Force and two meetings in Beirut with senior figures of the regime-backed paramilitary forces just days before October 7.

Amb. Bloomfield stressed, "Not only is the regime broadcasting its smokescreen to evade attribution. I believe it's also whispering its alibis in our ear, right here inside the Beltway."

Professor Sheehan discussed a recent attack on Professor Alejo Vidal-Quadras, the President of the International Committee in Search of Justice. Professor Vidal-Quadras, a former vice president of the European Parliament, was assaulted by armed individuals in Madrid, surviving a gunshot to the jaw in what appears to be an assassination attempt.

Professor Vidal-Quadras, known for his advocacy for the Iranian resistance in Europe, endorsed Professor Sheehan's book.

Highlighting the gravity of the attack in Spain, Professor Sheehan noted that Spanish authorities have launched an anti-terrorism investigation, which remains ongoing. Professor Vidal-Quadras, while recovering in the hospital, attributed the attack to the Iranian regime, a claim consistent with past accusations against individuals supporting opposition groups in Iran.

Prof. Sheehan said, "Those of us who study terrorist organizations and their state sponsors know that these entities are rarely creative in their use of violence. Murder-for-hire schemes, kidnapping attempts, and assassination plots have been ordered by Iranian authorities right here in Washington and all over Europe."

Citing his book "IRAN: The Ayatollah's Hidden Hand" Prof. Sheehan added, "The book we are releasing today pulls back the curtain on the Iranian regime's efforts to silence its pro-democracy foes and to intimidate the United States. These influence operations help to explain why U.S. officials are faced with this false dichotomy of military intervention on the one hand and unending diplomatic engagement grounded in appeasement on the other. This is not an accurate reflection of the options available to policymakers in this city. In this book, I help contextualize the disinformation peddled through an intricate network of Iranian operatives and how these influence operations undermine the organized resistance at home while influencing perceptions of them around the world."

"In part one of the book, I examine how the Iran Experts Initiative, the IEI, was rolled out to foster misleading impressions and promote the notion that the Iranian people are little more than compulsive protesters, compulsive demonstrators, and that the cries for civil and human rights on the Iranian street are nothing more than a normal part of everyday life and not an indication

of an overarching desire for change.”

To hear the complete speeches of the distinguished speakers highlighted in this report, kindly [view the entire briefing by following the link](#) below.

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