

Mr. President, are You Still Intent on Negotiating with Proven Murderers?

Democracy-seekers in Iran keep chanting: Obama, are You with Them or with Us?

By: Badi Badiozamani, Ph.D.

After months of denials, the Judicial Organization of the Armed Forces of the Islamic Republic of Iran acknowledged on December 19 that at least three people detained in the country's post-election protests were beaten to death by their jailers. It was also revealed by the Tehran prosecutor that a young doctor who had testified to a parliamentary committee, telling them that one of the protesters he had treated died from severe torture was himself killed by poisoning from a delivery salad laced with an overdose of blood pressure medication.

The unexpected and unprecedented announcement - -read it confession- - by a section of the ruling government confirmed one of the democracy movement's most devastating and embarrassing claims against authorities and the Pasdaran (Revolutionary Guards) that led the crackdown after June's rigged presidential election.

There are a few theories as to the reason for such a condemning confession. One is that the rulers who have been under relentless pressure over abuse claims are merely seeking to punish a few low ranking agents in order to shield senior level rulers of the Islamic regime. Another one is that this is one of the identifying signs and symptoms of the in-fighting among the factions of a crumbling system.

Regardless of the reason, this official confession is a stinging indictment of duplicity, lies and complicity of several strata of the Islamic regime:

- President Ahmadinejad not only lied by flatly denying any death or torture in any prison, but also continued his boring yet satanic gibberish by accusing Iran's enemies of being involved in the crimes.
- Almost all of the Judiciary officials of the Islamic Republic including Judge, Saeed Mortazavi who had the responsibility of oversight on the infamous Kahrizak prison, while being aware of the facts, denied the killings and lied to the world by accusing the opposition of lying.
- The Minister of Health, Dr. Kamran Bagheri Lankarani, lied to the world by officially declaring that the prisoners had died of meningitis.
- Brigadier-General Ahmad Reza Radan who was in charge of the prison twice, and now serves as the Deputy Commander of the Iranian police, lied to the world by stating that there had been no murders in the prison.
- Chief of the Greater Tehran Police, General Azizollah Rajabzadeh, officially and publicly declared in September that there were 130-140 detainees being held in Kahrizak prison and no murder had been committed there.

- Commander-in-Chief of the Police of Islamic Republic, Brigadier General Esmaeil Ahmadi-Moghaddam, has declared no less than five times that nobody had been killed because of torture and beating at Kahrizak prison.
- Commander-in-Chief of the Revolutionary Guards, Major General Mohammad Ali Jafari, also declared that nobody had been killed due to violence in any of the prisons.
- Almost all the clergy in the theocratic regime and almost all of the representatives in the so-called Islamic parliament lied to the world in this regard.

Mr. President, now that the lying, torturing and murdering of the Islamic regime of Iran has been proven beyond the shadow of a doubt, do you, as a world leader, think it is to the best interests of the United States and the free world to negotiate with such a regime?

Can the Obama who rightfully condemned the Abu Gharib detainee abuse and ordered the closing down of Guantanamo Bay prison – where no murder was committed – negotiate with a regime that murders its own citizens?

Can the president who championed change in the world diplomacy justify dealing with the devil as political necessity?

Mr. President, you have a historic window of opportunity in front of you. There are about seventy million people in Iran who have the potential to become your allies in fighting Islamic extremism, become pioneers of Islamic renaissance and enlightenment and bring peace and stability to the region. By siding with the democracy seekers of Iran you can help create another South Africa and make your mark in history of civilization. Mr. President, I implore you not to miss this great opportunity.

Badi Badiozamani, author of Iran & America: Rekindling A Love Lost, is an Iran expert who served as advisor to CNN's Iran Desk during the aftermath of Iranian presidential election and provided analysis.

Dec. 2009