

# **CIA Performance Assessment of the Occupation of the U.S. Embassy in Tehran on Aban 13, 1358**

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## **Abstract**

Iran's strategic position has attracted significant world powers, especially the United States, so the U.S. Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) has continuously monitored Iran's political and social situation. After the Islamic Revolution in Iran, the U.S. sensitivity towards the colonial theory doubled, and consequently, the CIA's espionage and interference in Iran increased. Such a situation was unbearable for Iranians who had a bitter experience of U.S. intervention in their country. Therefore, they considered a visa for the fugitive Shah by the United States as another betrayal. In return for fulfilling their demands, they seized the U.S. embassy in Tehran. With a descriptive-analytical manner, the present study aimed to answer 'how well the CIA has worked at the U.S. Embassy in resolving the hostage crisis?' Based on the results, with the hypothesis of CIA formal but covert intervention in Iran at the beginning of the Islamic Revolution and extensive efforts to resolve the U.S. government crisis, the CIA used its espionage process U.S. embassy after the Islamic Revolution with various tools. After capturing the embassy, they carried out many activities, including communicating with Iranian officials, mental espionage, communicating with Islamic movements, using local militias, and sending CIA officers to Iran to free the hostages. Define all these cases in the collection of maintaining colonialism and domination over Iran.

**Keywords:** CIA, U.S. Embassy, Occupation.

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## Introduction

One of the world's leading intelligence agencies is "The U.S. Central Intelligence Agency," known as the "CIA" The organization is a civilian overseas intelligence agency responsible for collecting, analyzing, and processing information worldwide. It was founded on September 18, 1947, in the U.S. state of Virginia. According to colonial theory, the United States desperately needed such an organization to gain world supremacy and fight its longtime rival, the Soviet Union, to expand its influence worldwide by acquiring information and espionage. But in 73-year history, in addition to its global impact, the organization has generally resorted to covert and apparent interventions in various countries. It is hostile to nations and independent governments whose political views are inconsistent with U.S. policy; this method is a kind of orientation towards becoming a superior power in the world. The CIA has a prominent role in the events and military wars of the United States or its allies. This approach will explain the CIA's practical situation in one of the most extraordinary events after the Islamic Revolution of Iran. In 1979, after the Islamic Revolution of Iran, the revolutionary youth, known as students following the Imam's line, seized the U.S. embassy in Tehran and took American diplomats hostage. Their demands were surrounding the US-backed Shah<sup>1</sup>.

In this regard, the U.S. government and the CIA, which had turned part of the embassy into a CIA base, are making great efforts to free the hostages. With the theoretical framework that the United States seeks to establish domination and colonization in independent countries, this study examines the U.S. intelligence service's performance in Iran's occupation with the hypothesis that the CIA officially made the embassy a place for espionage and in resolving this crisis. It has played a prominent role in the U.S. government, reviewing and explaining the CIA strategy towards a revolutionary country.

This hypothesis that the U.S. spy agency through the embassy played an intrusive role in the early years of the revolution in Iran and continued to violate international law during the embassy's occupation should be analyzed.

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1. Mohammad Reza Shah Pahlavi had fled Iran on December 17, 1978 due to widespread protests.

### **1. Occupation of The U.S. Embassy**

In the era of American domination of the world and the decline of the government's independence and their disintegration, U.S. oppressed countries to get their rights and bring the oppressed voice to the world and given the lack of cooperation of international organizations and human rights with them were forced to take the citizens of the great powers hostage.

Students following the Imam's line, consisting of students from the Polytechnic University (Amirkabir), Sharif University of Technology, etc., after issuing visa for Shah by Carter, with their experience and information from the United States's bygone decided to prevent previous events and not to let Shah get power again with the support of the United States. According to Hamilton Jordan, Chief of Staff: "for Khomeini's followers, the return of the young Shah in the last quarter of a century (the coup d'état of Mordad 28, 1332) with the help of the CIA was a dark day in the history of Iran, a Muslim nation that had been exploited by the atheist West" (Jordan, 1983: 28).

So they decided to seize the embassy of a seemingly powerful country like the United States. The U.S. embassy occupied by the people and students because the CIA had a large presence in this place. They realized, with official or unofficial news and information, the CIA, as in the past, controlling the Pahlavi's government and all governmental elements for its interests by establishing himself in the U.S. embassy, as in the past, the CIA was looking for plans for the Islamic Republic of Iran. The students made this prediction, and they discovered the CIA room and the spy devices in the embassy.

### **2. U.S. Embassy and CIA Interventions**

The U.S. Embassy and its security and political members in large and small countries and their officials and strategic places are critical U.S. techniques for influencing the nations' interests. U.S. embassies through the CIA security agents activity manage a country's political circumstances by newspapers. The U.S. spy agency's influence in each country's widely circulated newspapers is through the embassy's cultural affiliates (Sajedi, 1988: 47).

According to the evidence and documents, the U.S. embassies are responsible for obtaining information and transferring it to the central organization through the CIA intelligence and espionage forces. Making socio-political changes in the questioned country for their interests or the interests and promotion of parties and groups following American and

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liberal ideas are also among their other tribes. The essential tools to achieve this vital goal are the intellectuals of a country, newspapers without a clear framework, officials with the capacity and context for change, etc. Will explain the CIA's social and political influence below (Ibid: 47).

### **2.1. Establishment of CIA Station in Tehran for Increasing Intervention**

The CIA has two communication and information locations in different countries: "Station" and "Base." The "Base" consists of a small group of CIA operatives who report to a "Station" in the same country or a foreign country. The CIA station in India, for example, is located in New Delhi (Capital). Calcutta base reports to New Delhi station (Perry, 1994: 17).

Therefore, the station has many personnels and a regional tasks, preparing detailed and macro reports and transferring them to the Central Intelligence Agency in Washington. Still, bases with less force are subsets of stations. Some politicians or writers use the word "Base" for the U.S. Embassy in Tehran (See the book *Conquering Masoumeh Ebtekar*).

Nevertheless, in Iran, the CIA station is more comprehensive than the base. It controls the Middle East region and receives reports from CIA bases in different parts of the area. In the Middle East, the CIA station was Cyprus's capital in Nicosia until 1973 when relocated it to Tehran (Babaei, 2018: 21).

There are several reasons why this center was a CIA regional station. The students' examination of U.S. embassy documents yielded numerous reports from West Asian countries, including Iraq, Saudi Arabia, Turkey, and even African nations outside the Middle East. Such statements, which were usually not related to Iran, were sent to the CIA, which proves this center's comprehensiveness in Iran and their extensive interventions in this country (Students following the Imam's line, 1389: 111).

So the United States in Iran, based on its past trend in the Pahlavi era, managed a comprehensive espionage station to infiltrate and intervene in the region and Iran, especially in the new structure and government of the Islamic Republic.

### **2.2. The Importance of the Iran Station for the CIA**

The CIA station in Iran had particular importance to the United States because of Iran's strategic position in the West Asian region and another significant world power, the Soviet Union; this sensitivity increased after the Islamic Revolution's victory with government change. But the famous American author "Mark Boden" cleverly intends to escape the U.S.

government's accusation in an interview with the Atlantic site. Despite using the word station in an interview, he said: What you found at the U.S. embassy at the time was the CIA station consisting of three CIA agents: Tom Ahren, who had been in the country for about eight months; Bill Gorty, who was hired as a CIA officer in January 1979 for a month or two and was utterly crude and inexperienced (!), And Malcolm Calloff, a more experienced CIA officer, arrived in Tehran just four days before the embassy occupation. 'It was a small mission (!) of CIA officers at the embassy who had just begun to find their way in Tehran, and none of them could speak Persian?' (www.Theatlantic.com).

He seeks to downplay the role of the CIA in the U.S. embassy and Iranian affairs, using the words "Small Mission," "Raw Officer," and "Inexperienced." 'But what is reality?' 'Is Iran insignificant to the United States to send crude and inexperienced agents to Iran?' The importance of Iran from the past to the present for the United States and Washington's choice to head the embassy or the CIA station and agents in Iran show that this claim is baseless. To display the importance of the U.S. station and embassy in Iran in the contemporary era for the CIA and the U.S., we must remember one of Iran's choices. "Richard Holmes" was one of the options the U.S. government sent to Iran whom, during Nixon's presidency in 1345, he was the head of the CIA in the United States. The critical point is that the U.S. government appoints its CIA director as the U.S. ambassador to Iran in 1351 ... to the extent that this unusual choice surprises the Soviet ambassador, who asks Hoveida about it. Soviet ambassador Vladimir Irofiyev told Hoveida: "we heard that the Americans sent their first spy to Iran. Hoveyda replied: The Americans are our friends. At least they did not send us their tenth spy" (Mitrokhin, 2018:170).

"Henry Parasht" also opposed Nixon's move (appointing Holmes as ambassador to Iran): We wondered why the White House wanted to send such a person to Iran. A man somehow associated with the CIA. An organization that every Iranian thinks is responsible for overthrowing Mossadegh. It seems that we want to put aside the pretense of a neutral America and show that the Shah is our puppet! (Weiner, 2007: 369) This choice shows Iran's importance for the United States and Washington's careful selection of CIA agents sent to Iran. The most apparent evidence to refute the claim of "Mark Boden" is that "Patrick Houghton," author of "U.S. Foreign Policy and the Hostage Crisis," in his book U.S. Embassy Officers in Tehran in 1358, as opposed to "Boden" count high-ranking CIA agents. He said, "the big problem was that high-ranking CIA agents

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in Iran themselves were being taken hostage." So new relationships almost had to be formed from scratch (Patrick Houghton, 1393:140).

Based on the results, historical evidence shows the great importance of the CIA station in Iran. Then, the contradiction in the statements and writings of American politicians and writers confirms the above note. Finally, the CIA's intervention in Iran, which caused the change and relocation of government officials during the Pahlavi regime and the influence of the officials of the Islamic Republic of Iran, definitely required a comprehensive station in Iran, which also happened.

#### 2.3. Documents, Confidential Systems, and Their Importance

The CIA has managers with various ideas and tastes who have different methods and styles of execution. During the embassy occupation, the head of the CIA "Stansfield Turner," used advanced and various technologies for espionage and intelligence instead of using more human resources (Turner, 1367: 147).

This method was the same at the CIA station in the U.S. Embassy in Tehran, where there was an example of storing and sending information. When the students reached the embassy's central building, they found a room in the CIA spy station and that some files and safes were still intact (Ebtekar, 1379: 87-89).

The students' discovery of the room was an official and public unveiling of U.S. and CIA spy documents in Iran and other parts of the world, leading to an unprecedented revelation. In this room, communication systems and security personnel are exposed by students according to prominent documents. Behind the CIA room at the embassy was the Telecommunication Room, connected to the Central CIA in Washington by a telecommunications facilities. What was typed in the place was stored in several ways at the same time. A handful of Americans went to the room because different content with varying degrees of security was typed here and encrypted by a computer and stored differently.

The reports were as follows:

|   |   |
|---|---|
| 1 | A Copy was Sent to the Central CIA in Washington at the Same Time and Stored There.   |
| 2 | A Copy is Stored in a Punch on Unique Cardboard Strips.   |
| 3 | Saved a Copy on the Cassette Tape (and if Placed the Tape Recorder, Could hear Only Intermittent Whistling Sound From It!). |
| 4 | A Copy is Also Stored in Computer Memory (Pur Yazdanparast, 1390: 135).   |

During the students' siege, the officers in this room destroyed almost all the computers and cassette tapes due to the information's secrecy with any means at their disposal. Next to the document and the communications rooms, there was a document forgery room. With the facilities available, CIA agents could forge any form; because the CIA did not adhere to the countries rules and regulations in principle and considered anything permissible. For example, the seals of different airports worldwide and the seals of Mehrabad airport were also present in the CIA room. The seals were used many times and even had a second version that had not yet been removed from the packaging plastic. The Mehrabad airport seal sample, which had a moving historian in the middle, was exactly reconstructed, and its date was copied and made separately from the original seal. Many used and new fake passports to private and illegally exit people from Iran for various purposes (Ibid: 136). One of the safes, obtained counterfeit access and exit visas for airports in European, Asian, African, and Latin American countries. There were also several forged passports with American photos along with fake names and nationalities. Thomas Ahren, the head of the CIA station in Tehran, had German access with a pseudonym that introduced him as a businessman (Ebtekar, 1379: 144).

This falsification of documents meant the international actions of American agents in a third country. There was a telephone control device in the CIA room at the embassy, and it could easily control tens of thousands of telephone numbers in Tehran. By giving the phone number of their choice to this device, the American spies could eavesdrop on the conversations without the negotiating parties' notice. Contrary to diplomatic and international law, the CIA had allowed itself to control the telephone of any private or public place in Iran. Mohammad Hashemzadeh Yazdanparast, a captor student, recounts a memory of this type of telephone controller during the occupation:

“One day (during the occupation), a member of the Provisional Government visited the embassy with three people. They claimed that the students had invaded another country by seizing the U.S. embassy. The students also took them to the document and communication room to show them the facilities available there. Seeing the document room and the spy facilities in it, and then seeing the telephone control device and hearing the student talking to him, this person asked: ‘Can this device also control the telephone of the president's house?’ The student replied that it made no difference to the device and then gave the machine the phone number that the students had for emergency calls to Bani-Sadr,

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who was then president. It was not long before Bani-Sadr got on the phone to talk to the person he had called and started talking. ‘The students asked this esteemed visitor: is this the embassy or the spy house?!’ He was silent for a moment and then left the document room. As far as I remember and there is a possibility of a mistake, this person was Engineer Ezatullah Sahabi” (Pour Yazdanparast, 1390: 136).

During the former regime, which openly listened to the words and decisions of Iranian officials and included them in its classified documents, the CIA followed this trend after the Islamic Revolution (before the capture of the embassy) and sought to control Iran's political elements in it and wants to obtain its desires. The embassy's systems and documents were of particular importance to the Americans, so much that at the beginning of the hostage-taking of Elizabeth Swift, the political agent of the U.S. Embassy in Tehran, called Harold H. Saunders, the then U.S. State Adviser<sup>2</sup>, and explains the embassy occupation. Saunders first advises her to destroy some essential documents and tools! Commenting on his recommendation to Swift on November 4, 1979, Saunders said: “I told Elizabeth to do the necessary and obvious things. For example, destroy the stamps used by consular members to issue visas” (Cologne, 1362: 119).

According to a review of the documents on December 31, 1979, the students stated that some of the hostages were CIA operatives, citing documents referred to Thomas Ahren, William Dafferty, and Malcolm Calp (Bell, 1371: 476). Two of the hostages released by the students in the middle of the hostage-taking incident were a man and a woman from CIA agents (Ebtekar, 1379: 119).

The assortment of CIA agents in Iran and the use of spy technology of the day, the importance, and fear of revealing personal devices indicated a project calculated by the CIA for the Islamic Republic's future. The CIA believed that if it infiltrated the Islamic Republic's political structure promptly and at high and vital levels, it could take over or overthrow this government like the previous regime.

### **3. CIA Actions to Overcome the Crisis and Release the Hostages**

The United States held its first round of high-level secret meetings, later known as the "Military Committee," in Washington on Thursday in the

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2. Harold H. Saunders is an Analyst at the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA). See: [WWW.NYTIMES.COM/2016/03/09/WORLD/MIDDLEEAST/HAROLD-H-SDUNDERS-MIDEAST-PEACE-BROKER-DIES-AT-85-HTML](http://WWW.NYTIMES.COM/2016/03/09/WORLD/MIDDLEEAST/HAROLD-H-SDUNDERS-MIDEAST-PEACE-BROKER-DIES-AT-85-HTML).



first week of the hostage crisis to find a solution to the office's problem Brzeniski (U.S. National Security Adviser). These meetings were so secret that they were not recorded in the diary. One of the participants was Stansfield Turner (CIA Director). Drawing up a rescue operation plan was one of the goals of this "Military Committee," which was held two or three times a week, which was finally operated in May 1980 (Cologne, 1362: 129).

Except for rescue operations, the last resort of which was costly, the United States had to make civilian efforts to resolve the issue. As a result, U.S. intelligence agencies, domestic and government agencies have sought various ways to overcome the crisis. CIA could establish extensive contacts in the world with many governments and individuals, including Iran and Iranians. The CIA's efforts to resolve the problem were as follows:

### **3.1. Communication with Iranian Officials**

#### **3.1.1. Communication with the President**

One of the CIA's functions was to communicate with secular Iranian political figures, including Bani Sadr. It was easier to resume this connection due to the CIA communication lines that had already been established with Bani Sadr. He had many reasons to deal with Carter against the people on hostages and tried to get more American support by taking the hostages out of the students' control. However, some members of the Revolutionary Council's stubborn stance, such as Dr. Beheshti and eventually Imam Khomeini, thwarted these efforts. (Ebtekar, 1379: 185).

The CIA managed this communication project, but 'how did the CIA's relationship with Bani Sadr come about, and where was it supposed to end?' In the spy nest collection, they found a document that tells the students' question to Tom Ahren, the head of the CIA station during the capture of Bani Sadr, which indicates that the CIA has a connection with him. This document is as follow:

Document No. 12 Saturday 8 / Dey / 58 - The eighth session in the documents of the spy nest. Subject: Remarks by Tom Ahren: The U.S. government and the CIA wanted to connect with people who could play an essential role in the Iranian revolution. When Bani-Sadr was in France, a retired CIA officer was assigned to go to France and talk to Mr. Bani-Sadr. He introduced himself as a company representative and stated that he was interested in talking to Bani Sadr about Iran's economic future and its relationship with the Western world, especially the United States. He agreed with this issue. This initial meeting was shortly before Imam Khomeini's return to Tehran, which in France scheduled. When I

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came to Iran, the headquarters was still interested in pursuing this issue, and in this regard, they asked me to work on this issue. The man came to Tehran around Mordad 29, and during his three-week stay in Iran, he met Bani-Sadr at least three times and maybe five times. According to Tom Ahren, the ultimate goal of this relationship is to hire Bani Sadr.

Step-by-step plan: at this stage, all issues are not stated. At this stage, Bani Sadr should work as a reliable economic consultant of this company familiar with financial problems and political issues.

Next steps: subsequent meetings with him in Tehran or Paris can go a little further and ask him questions about a series of important political issues.

At the last meeting, Bani-Sadr agreed to act as the company's reliable economic advisor and accepted the \$ 1,000 monthly salary offer (Institute for Political Research Studies, 1389: 487). Asked by the students whether Bani-Sadr knew his opponent was a CIA agent, Ahren said: did not tell the Bani-Sadr at this stage that he was the opposite side of the CIA. But one thing could have given him the impression that: how to make a monthly offer (receive a thousand dollars) that was offered and agreed without the usual business arrangements and could indicate that the problem is not so simple (Shah Ali, 1385: 178).

From here, Bani-Sadr falls into the CIA's trap with an economic tactic, and activities begin, and during several meetings, the CIA turns Bani-Sadr into a tool of its own. Also, Masoumeh Ebtekar's account of the process of finding Bani Sadr's name among the classified documents shows the CIA's long-standing relationship with Bani Sadr. This discovery of the form could disrupt many behind-the-scenes issues and events and expose the connection. Ebtekar says: One document was about a person whom the CIA referred to as SD LURE1. In dey 1358, we found seven records about this person in the safe of the head of the CIA base in Tehran during the U.S. embassy's occupation. The first document, dated July 27, 1979, was related to reports of a meeting with a person named SD ROTTER, who later turned out to be Qashqai.<sup>3</sup> He urged CIA officials to contact someone named SD LURE1. The document listed his phone number, and for the first time in Paris, contact him. By checking this phone number, we found out that it belongs to the house of Mr. Bani Sadr, who was soon to be elected President of Iran (Ebtekar, 1379: 150).

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3. Khosrow Qashqai was directly linked to the CIA in the United States and was the liaison between the CIA, Bani Sadr, and Commander Ahmad Madani. (IRGC Political Office. (11/4/1361). Journal of Events and Analyzes. No. 47.p. 27).

The person who was chosen to approach Bani-Sadr and use the cover of economic issues was an agent with the real name of "Vernon Cassin" who was well versed in financial matters, who introduced himself as an essential American businessman. In the initial meetings, Bani Sadr demands the continuation of these meetings, and in these appointments, we see strange words from Bani Sadr. According to the obtained documents, Bani Sadr said in his first meeting with this spy: "has exaggerated about Khomeini's ability and power, Khomeini cannot run the country alone and must rely on others" (Shah Ali, 1385: 187).

The CIA agent viewpoint about the interpretation of Bani Sadr's statement is as follows: and this view of Bani Sadr is to some extent in line with what he said in Paris: I need Khomeini, but Khomeini needs me too. This theory's tone was such that one inferred that L-1 (Bani Sadr) thought there were limitations to what could be expected of Khomeini (Ibid: 188-189).

In another document, the CIA analyzes the character of Bani Sadr, whether it can be a suitable option for them or not. The positive points of Bani Sadr's name-based on the CIA spy-are expressed as follows:

Positive points

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|---|
| 1. Because he (Bani Sadr) is a Veteran Conspirator (Designer), if he Feels that the Regime is Deviating from its Revolutionary Goals or that it Will be in his Favor, he May not See an Obstacle Future to Conspire Against the Government. |
| 2. Although he Probably Does not have any Financial Problems, he Should Keep in Mind that May With a Short Warning Deport, and at that Time, He Can use Our Financial Aid.  |
| 3. Although he Respects Khomeini, he does not Consider him Infallible.  |
| 4. He has Political Ambitions. ( Islamic Publishing Office, 1: 471)   |

There are various analyzes of Bani Sadr's initial purpose of this organization. The conjecture about the capture is that Bani-Sadr was looking for a quick solution to free himself as a high-ranking official from the hostage issue and strengthen Jimmy Carter's position in the next presidential election. Bani-Sadr later said in his memoirs that he supported any action in Carter's favor. He probably has traded with Carter's entourage and U.S. associates, as Bani-Sadr's previous contacts with the CIA and the possibility of continuing these contacts suggest that official communications made a deal with Carter.

This analysis is reinforced when, during Operation Tabas, Bani-Sadr issued a quarter after Carter's public speech stating that "there are important documents in the remaining helicopters in Tabas" ordering the

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bombing of those helicopters. Carter's speech about the existence of documents on the plane was not public but intended that moderate friends in Iran should not be exposed to the papers and use them again (Kieza, 1362: 77).

Another reason for the CIA's use of Bani-Sadr is that just a few weeks after the embassy occupation, he was a member of the fifteen-member Revolutionary Council, became president in January 1979, and began a campaign to oust students and force them to hand over all documents to the government. People close to him later told students how strange it was for Bani Sadr to obtain the records. Bani-Sadr was a stubborn opponent of student hostage-taking from the beginning because he was worried about his relationship with "Rutter 4" being leaked following the hostage-taking and revelations. Based on the embassy documents, the CIA had assessed the association with Bani Sadr in the long run. Thus, the CIA had always monitored a country's top political options for its political purposes and concerning his background had employed Bani-Sadr to escape from the hostage crisis.

### **3.1.2. Communication With a Key Government Official**

Sadegh Qutbzadeh appointed Minister of Foreign Affairs in the Provisional Government of Bazargan on Azar 8, 1358, and this position will continue until Shahrivar 19, 1359. Before that, he was the Director-General of the Radio and Television of Iran. Regarding his activities in the early stages of the government, he could have played a significant role in the hostage issue. According to the evidence, he had been associated with the CIA for many years before the revolution. He was somehow prepared by the CIA to influence the main structure of the government of the Islamic Republic. In this regard, Al-Shaab newspaper, published in Beirut, writes in an article entitled "CIA spy in Tehran" in 1361: "Qutbzadeh decided to go to the United States to study 25 years ago and was employed by the CIA when he entered Town University" (Poor Darab, 1395: 787).

In her book, Farah Pahlavi's mother, while accusing Qutbzadeh of being a CIA agent, states that Qutbzadeh had extensive contacts with the CIA, SAVAK, the Palestinian organization Al-Fatah, and Muammar Gaddafi, the Libyan leader (Diba, 1380: 474-477).

According to his thoughts and staying many years in the United States and Canada during the Pahlavi regime, he was a significant Washington figure. Because the Americans realized that Qutbzadeh was not anti-American (Students following the Imam's line, 1389, 18: 130). It led to using him in the hostage crisis. The CIA also evaluated Qutbzadeh.

Usually, one of the CIA's functions to spy on and obtain information was to use university professors for heads of state psychology, as was the case with Qutbzadeh. "The importance of using professors," says Stephenid Turner: from working with the CIA on 'what we intend to do to employ university professors?' I must say that professors' primary goal is to use their thoughts and information in world affairs, ranging from the psychology of state heads and awareness of the oil-rich country's affairs to identifying powerful causes of Islamic fundamentalism (Turner, 1367: 169).

Qutbzadeh's investigator was Richard Katham, a professor at the University of Pittsburgh who was a regular contributor to the CIA. In the 1950s, he was stationed at the embassy in Tehran and had experience working in Iran. According to the documents, he considered Sadegh Qutbzadeh, like Gaddafi, a bit of a jerk (Students following the Imam's line, 1389: 67).

Meanwhile, to free the hostages, Katem finally goes directly to Qutbzadeh to solve the problem. In December 1979 (Azar 1358), he began a conversation with Qutbzadeh in Iran, and at the same time, reported the conversation by telephone to the U.S. State Department. When that did not work, Katem continued to talk to Qutbzadeh over the phone from his Pittsburgh<sup>4</sup> office. During this time, Qutbzadeh was in direct contact with Katem, who was a CIA official at the time (Patrick Houghton, 1393: 130).

Regarding the suspicion of Qutbzadeh's connection with the United States, Masoumeh Ebtakar says: "later the role of Qutbzadeh for relating with the U.S. government apparent with the transfer of U.S. Chargé d'Affaires Bruce Lingen and another U.S. diplomat to the State Department building (Iran)" (Ebtakar, 1379: 176-177).

According to evidence, through its spy agents, the CIA considered painless ways to release itself to connect with the so-called moderates. If Qutbzadeh had the power to liberate them and the students and revolutionaries did not stand in the way, he would have released the hostages because of American friends' interaction and taking advantage of them. Still, this tactic of the CIA also failed.

### 3.1.3. Communication With Monarchist Officials

The CIA is also reaching out to monarchists who hated the Islamic Revolution to release the hostages. Oveysi was an option that the CIA worked with him. Oveysi was the commander of the Imperial Army's

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4. A City Located in the State of Pennsylvania, USA.

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ground forces and the perpetrator of 1342 and 17 Shahrivar 1357. On Dey 14, 1357, he applied for retirement under the pretext of treatment and went to France. With the financial and security cooperation of the US, British, and Israeli intelligence services and joining individuals such as Bahram Ariana, Ashraf, Reza Pahlavi, and Ali Amini, he establishes a plan for a coup against the revolution. According to Ettelaat newspaper, in Turkey's border areas, with the cooperation of the former governor of Khorasan, Valian, they are making moves to attack Iran (Ettelaat newspaper, 1358: 1-2).

The French newspaper Figaro wrote four days after Oveysi arrived in Paris: "Oveysi is trying to persuade Carter to stage a military coup against Iran" (www.Farsnews, 1387). But Oveysi, who was also surrounded by CIA forces, initially failed to impress Carter because Carter hoped to engage with the Islamic Republic and seize national privileges in his favor. Still, it changed the game for the Americans. According to Massoud Ansari, Carter gave the green light to Oveysi and his team for the coup. During the story of the Ahmad Ali Massoud Ansari capture, Farah Pahlavi's cousin, after a month-long meeting with the Shah in Egypt, he says: "as soon as my arrival in Paris, my first step was to meet Oveysi, and he was probably given the green light by the Americans, who were disappointed with the release of their hostages in Tehran. Oveysi had gathered people around himself as advisers and colleagues. People like Shahriyar Ahi, who was in charge of finances, Mansour Rafizadeh, who was once the head of SAVAK in the United States, later published a book in English called Shahid, in which he explicitly admitted his membership in the CIA. At the time, they were sighing regularly about the United States and the CIA and their role alongside Oveysi. He permanently talks about the Americans and says that if they want, we will act, and will work, and if they do not, it will not be done" (Ansari, 1384: 190) The CIA's behavior was to incite the previous regime's failed leaders to create chaos and coups to challenge the independent Islamic revolution and draw the space in such a way that they release their employees under socio-political pressure. The idea was put into the group's management working group by embedding people alongside Oveysi, a former CIA member, and others. They could not do anything and implement their goals in the face of the ideological and popular revolution in Iran.

### 3.2. CIA and Counter-Revolutionary Militia

With its intelligence domination, the CIA, during the Pahlavi regime, and after the Islamic Revolution, controlled and examined the groups'

statistics for and against the government, left or right, etc., made connections with them by considering their wills. Students do not communicate with anyone or any group they did not know enough not to misuse or disrupt the capture and leak information flow during the capture.

But Masoumeh Ebtekar says one of the CIA-linked groups tried to contact and persuade them to hand over the hostages. She remembers that one of his friends insisted on meeting her in Tehran; her friend studied in the United States and returned to Iran after graduation. Her friend spoke of a mediator and believed that he could influence Americans if students softened their stance because of his strong ties to the U.S. Congress and elsewhere. After conversations between Ebtekar and her friend and the mediator's words, she realizes that the mediator was a CIA operative in Iran. Ebtekar says: "I quickly explained to my friend that I had seen his name in some embassy documents. This man, Fereydoun, was the leader of a small counter-revolutionary militia and had close ties to the CIA office in Tehran in the first months after the Shah's fall" (Ebtekar, 1379: 268-267). At the beginning of the revolution, many of the country's militias were mostly made by the CIA or had contacts with them, and the CIA trained their members. The CIA uses Iranian youth, sometimes students living abroad, to secure their interests, financial promises, etc. and forms such groups not to be used in the crisis days.

### **3.3. CIA and Islamic Organizations**

The CIA, known as an overseas organization, is responsible for forming networks of influence and communication in various organizations, organizations, and movements in the East or the West of the world. Islamic movements are no exception to this rule. One of the political currents that the CIA hoped to negotiate and release the hostages was the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) led by Yasser Arafat. This organization had close ideological ties to the Islamic Revolution (Cologne, 1362: 132).

For years, the CIA had maintained a so-called secret communication line with the PLO headquarters in Beirut. For example, the line ensured Americans and American diplomats' safety in the Lebanese capital, where the PLO controlled parts of the city. In the first week of the occupation, help was sought from this secret communication channel; asked Arafat to use his influence in the Islamic Revolution and Imam Khomeini to free the hostages. U.S. Secretary of State Cyrus Vance and other former government officials said after the hostage-taking that

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Arafat's involvement played a significant role in the release of thirteen black and white hostages on November 19 and 20, 1979 (Ibid, 133-134).

The achievement, which Cyrus Vance and others believe led to the release of some of the hostages, was regarding the CIA's effects through its secret channel with PLO to use promptly. Infiltrating and maintaining private and non-private relations of the CIA with various currents and groups, both Islamic and non-Islamic, has been permanent to continue the American world power essential techniques.

### **3.4. Mental Espionage**

The CIA also committed an unnatural act in its efforts to obtain information from the hostages. The U.S. intelligence service has released a new report from the classified files section, which it claims has been monitoring U.S. diplomats through personal communication throughout the detention period. According to published information, the CIA has used mental connections with U.S. diplomats who have been detained in Iran for about 15 months on at least 200 occasions. The CIA claimed that U.S. diplomats had already received special military training to use their sixth sense. In this way, even when detained, the diplomats in Iran informed CIA agents of their whereabouts, health, and treatment of the diplomats through secret mental communication. The operation, known as the "Grill Film," was allegedly organized and tracked by dozens of spy operations from inside dimly lit rooms and cellars, such as a building in Fort Mead, Maryland. Officers stationed in the building tried to use mental strength training to communicate with diplomats detained in Iran. The CIA claims that they even realized how physically close the Iranian security forces were to American diplomats. In this way, other U.S. intelligence agencies assisted the CIA, and high-ranking Pentagon commanders also participated. After returning the American diplomats to their country and examining the results of this mental action, the Pentagon compared about 202 reports provided to them by the "Grill Film" spy plan with the diplomats' words, which is only 7 cases received reports of mental connection was correct. But a U.S. Air Force commander acknowledged in his statement: "Over half of the 'mental communication' reports were incorrect, and in only 59 cases we could say they were close to reality." Many errors and mistakes always accompany this type of information (www.yjc.ir, 2017).

In this section, we witnessed one of the CIA's different actions and methods to end a crisis, which, like many methods, had a small success rate.



### 3.5. CIA Cooperation With Security Allies

Throughout its life, the U.S. intelligence agency has worked extensively with U.S. allies and their intelligence services. In the case of the U.S. embassy's seizure, the CIA is engaged in intelligence-espionage interaction with Canada and the Canadian embassy in Iran. The story was that on the day of the embassy hostage-taking, five members of the U.S. embassy decided to flee through the back door of the embassy. Their names were: The Lajks (Mark and Cora), the Stanfords (Joe and Katie), and Bob Anders, who entered the north alley of the embassy and left (Wells, 1366: 156).

Also, Henry Lee Schatz, a U.S. agricultural associate hiding in the home of a Swedish embassy staffer, was taken to the home of John Shi Jordan, bringing the total number of Americans in the Canadian embassy staff six (Haji Mirzaei, 1390: 89).

Seventy-three days after the hostage crisis, Canadian Ambassador Ken Taylor became fully involved in the incident. His efforts to find a solution to the problem failed due to the lack of unity of diplomats from other countries in adopting a single approach (Ibid, 92). The critical point is that Taylor was a CIA spy in Iran before Bob (the CIA agent sent to Iran) arrived in Tehran. (Ibid, 97)<sup>5</sup> Stansfield Turner and a team of CIA experts worked to find a plan to rescue six Americans.

Turner briefed Taylor on his and his colleagues' efforts to map out six Americans. On January 2, 1980, (Dey 12, 1358), CIA officials sent a man named Tony Mendes, Head of the Graphic and Documentation Department of the CIA Technical Services (OTS), to Ottawa, Canada. After much deliberation, Mendes suggested introducing the six Americans as Canadian filmmakers to make a film about the Iranian revolution for Hollywood to get Americans to flee Iran (Haji Mirzaei, 1390: 102).

After the passport process became apparent, Tony Mendes, along with John Chambers (one of Hollywood's leading make-up artists) and Bob Seidel, a Hollywood producer, set up a fake film production company called Studio Six the solution look natural. Documents were sent to the CIA headquarters to forge the stamp of entry into Iran, affix the symbol of Iran and the entry and exit of other countries, etc (Ibid, 103).

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5. Ken Taylor, he had been planning espionage in Iran since the 1950s, and this espionage was kept secret by the Canadian and American governments. See (<http://www.theglobeandmail.com/news/world/canadas-man-in-tehran-was-a-cia-spy/article1441545>).

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After many struggles, the CIA, in cooperation with the Canadian embassy and security apparatus, could remove six Americans from Iran by flight. The Carter administration even refused to raise it in congressional committees to prevent CIA involvement in the operation (Ibid, 106).

This story was one of the most successful CIA actions in history. This plan's success was so significant for the CIA that, on the day of the establishment of the CIA Instagram page, dedicated its first post to the success of this story posting a plan. The story of the U.S. embassy's seizure finally ends on Dey 30, 1359, with the signing of the Algerian agreement and the hostages return to their country in perfect health.

### **Conclusion**

The U.S. spy agency has taken steps to gain information and intervene in countries' affairs through its human resources and various technologies. In Iran, too, he had put this process on the list before occupying the embassy to dominate government elements by staying at the U.S. embassy in Tehran. This study explained the extent of the CIA's intervention in capturing the U.S. embassy in Tehran.

The outcome and function of the CIA in this case are:

- 1) Gathering information which is not a part of an embassy's activities and is defined as espionage was one of the CIA's day-to-day operations in Tehran;
- 2) The CIA investigated forgery of documents and fabrication of forged tools for illegal travel and operations;
- 3) The CIA was one of the U.S. government's prominent decision-makers to get out of the crisis if the original plans for the release of the hostages were in the CIA's hands;
- 4) This organization's performance was very significant from the influence of the system's high-ranking personalities in a designed way;
- 5) Communication with monarchist figures and supporters of the former king is one of the methods used by this organization;
- 6) Maintaining contact with the Islamic Republic friends, continuing the lines of communication with the pro-and anti-currents, giving lines to the militant groups in Iran to use them promptly in serious situations such as this are among the characteristics of the CIA;
- 7) Saw the psychology of various people, especially officials, and the use of their weaknesses and strengths as the most critical CIA methods in this crisis;

8) Recorded Intellectual espionage and extrajudicial acts in the CIA record at this historical juncture.

As a result, the CIA's operational status in this event, its extensive intervention, and performance, including its significant cognitive role and influential executive role, can be seen. A particular part of the U.S. government's foreign policy in the face of this historic event was aware of its actions. Although it did not capture the U.S. embassy, this spy agency could create significant problems for the Islamic Republic of Iran, such as a political or social coup, in dangerous situations. Imam, people, and the students following Imam's line eradicated this great danger in Iran and the region. In the critical period of the Islamic Republic of Iran's government, it should study the CIA's approach and plans and conspiracies and use past issues as an essential experience.

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