# Iran Hostage Crisis

In November 4th, 1979, a group of students in Iran raided the United States embassy in Tehran. The students were members of the Muslim Student Followers of the Imam's Line and they strictly followed the Imam’s rules. They not only invaded the United States embassy, but also took the whole embassy occupants hostage for 444 days (Coscia 19). This has so far been the longest hostage in history. The learners were not ready to budge on their request thus took the embassy hostage to prove how serious they were with their demands. The president of the United States at the time, President Jimmy Carter said they did not negotiate with terrorists and thus was not willing to listen to them. These hostages included fifty two American citizens and diplomats (Coscia 19). The government of the United States, a typically non-tolerant to blackmail, could not conform to what the ‘terrorist students’ as they were termed demanded.

## Reasons for the Iranian Hostage Crisis

Taabar notes that the Iranian hostage crisis was as a result of a series of activities that had been taking place for over fifty years before the ordeal, which was between the two countries; Iran and the United States of America (670). Iranians felt oppressed by the Americans. The USA was involved in every business that Iran was engaged in. Apparently, the Iranians did not fancy that idea much. However, the core action that triggered the hostile takeover by the students was when President Jimmy Carter allowed Shah, a citizen of Iran who had been deployed, to undergo his cancer treatment from the United States (Tabaar 670). Shah’s treatment was not the cause of the hostage attack; it was just a measure that accelerated and pushed the students towards taking the actions as they did. The learners were afraid the scenario since Shah was receiving treatment in the United States and the CIA was focused on bringing him back to Iran and enthroning him once again. This had happened before, thus as a precautionary measure, they did what they thought would catch the attention of the United States government. The main reason the students took the American embassy hostage was because they were tired of the interference of the United States in their affairs. The students were seeking attention thus decided to make their move dramatic. They also wanted to introduce one of their revolutionary leaders, Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini, who was against America in all ways. This cleric was known internationally for his feelings against America and had spoken boldly about his stance. Since President Jimmy Carter did not budge and comply with the demands of the revolutionary students, the hostages were kept in captivity for 444 days. President Carter did not lead for the second term and historians believe the crisis adversely deteriorated the commander in chief. The students set their hostages free after President Ronald Reagan addressed the matter during his inaugural speech (Banks 54). The occurrence was just the beginning of events that would unfold later to destroy the relationship between America and Iran completely. The act not only jeopardized Iran as a country but also the whole of the Middle East.

## Impact of the Iranian Hostage Crisis

The hostage crisis curved a historical impact which is still being felt by both the American and middle eastern citizens to date. To begin with, there have been a lot of terrorist attacks in the Middle East which are blamed on America. The violence incidents which have as well taken place on American soil have been equally blamed on the Middle East. As much as these attacks seem independent from the hostage crisis, they are actually related. The hostage crisis sparked a revenge mission on the part of the Americans and they, therefore, attack the Middle East with any opportunity they get, albeit the regime does not come out directly on the rivalry cause (McCain 10). The cause of the attacks which are back and forth are only revealed by analysts who when asked about the origin of the immense hatred, relate it to the 1979 hostage crisis in Iran.

The 9/11 terrorist attack was orchestrated by terrorists from the Middle East. There is still no proof that the terrorists were from Iran. However, due to the immense hatred that has been created over the past 37 years, there is a possibility that Iran was involved in the attack (McCain 10). The terror led to the destruction of a significant part of United States major cities as well as numerous deaths, carried out to send a message to the US government. The hostage crisis marked the onset of a United States which did not meddle in the running of Iran. However, they orchestrators made sure the United States would spend a considerable amount of time trying to get even.

As a result of the hostage crisis, the United States combined efforts with Saddam Hussein who was a leader in Iraq. Critics purport that the USA promoted the Iran- Iraq war because they hated Iran (McCain 10). They, therefore, supported Saddam and even went ahead to accord Iraq all manner of military support as long as it was used against the rival nation. Both America and Iran were blinded by the hatred they had for each other to the extent that they were willing to go any lengths to get even with each other.

It is believed that President Carter was advised against admitting Shah for treatment in his country because it would have caused trouble in Iran (Busby 36). He, however, failed to heed to the call because some of Shah’s close friends urged him so. As he was being warned against his undertakings, he ignored and as a joke, even asked what his advisors would ask him to do in case the US embassy was taken hostage (Busby 36). From this incident, the American presidents who succeeded henceforth have not been allowed to make certain decisions by themselves. They must have advisors with whom they jointly make decisions to in order to secure the country as much as possible.

Finally, for Iran, the hostage crisis made the country miss an opportunity to associate them closely with the USSR (Taabar 78). Shah had been a great opposition of the Soviet Union. Therefore when he was forced out of power, the Soviet Union approached Iran. Taabar notes that he ordeal took place after the Hostage crisis after the Iranians had depicted that their interests were different from the interests of Shah (78). Even so, Khomeini was not for the idea thus Iran lost its chance to be part of the Soviet Union.

## Conclusion

In conclusion, the Iranian Hostage crisis in 1979 to 1981 made a huge impact on the relationship between Iran and the United States. To date, the two countries cannot trust each other. With the mistrust in place, related revenge missions continue to occur frequently. The immense impact of the crisis was permanent and is still being felt by citizens of the two nations to date. The United States government continues to be extremely cautious when dealing with Iran. In fact, the loathing between the two countries has largely inflicted on the Middle East in general. Despite the hostage crisis taking place more than 35 years ago, its political impacts are still felt by both the two present-day countries.

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