Name:

Date:

Iran: Revolution and Conflict

Iran became an Islamic republic after the 1979 revolution. Since then, the country's religious leadership has enforced strict laws that many Iranians — including some religious Muslims — oppose. Under their rule, elections exist, but all candidates are screened by religious authorities. Women in Iran are required by law to wear modest clothing in public, including a headscarf, and those who violate the rules may face fines or arrest by Iran's morality police. The Internet and media are heavily monitored and censored, protests are often suppressed, and critics risk imprisonment and, in some cases, execution. Amnesty International reports that the government has executed tens of thousands of people, including political prisoners, since the revolution.

Defenders of the regime argue that the religious leaders are preserving public morality and Iran's cultural identity, that many — and in some years most — executions are for serious crimes such as drug trafficking rather than for opposing the government, and that some opposition movements are encouraged by foreign powers, including the United States.

The Islamic Revolution deposed Shah Reza Pahlavi. Shah is a Persian word that means king. Iran is an oil-rich nation. The Shah used Iran's oil wealth to modernize his nation through programs similar to the reforms Ataturk introduced in Turkey decades earlier. He allowed women to vote and hold jobs, built big cities, and created a more secular or non-religious society.

The Shah was unpopular with many Iranians. Many of his closest advisors were corrupt. Opposition leaders were forced to leave the nation or face SAVAK, the monarch's brutal secret police. In 1971, the Shah held a three-day celebration marking 2,500 years of Persian monarchy, which is believed to have cost nearly one billion dollars today. The Shah hosted leaders and celebrities from around the world as parts of his nation struggled with poverty and drought. Religious Iranians were also displeased with the secular changes the Shah imposed upon them.

America supported the Shah, and religious leaders seized control of Iran; they denounced the United States as the "Great Satan." Shortly after the United States allowed the Shah to come to New York City for cancer treatment, Iranian students stormed the American embassy in Tehran and held 52 Americans hostage for more than a year.

The United States officially designates Iran as a state sponsor of terrorism. Iran has provided weapons, training, and money to Hezbollah, a militant group that has called for the elimination of Israel. Iranian leaders argue that they are supporting the spread of Islamic values and removing Western influence from what they consider Muslim lands.

Answer in Complete Sentences

*1. Compare life in Iran with life in a western nation such as the United States.

*A higher order learning question. Any reasonable answer will be accepted.

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Name: _____

Date: _____

Fill in the Blanks

Iran's r__l__g__o__s leadership enforces s__r__ct laws. Women are required to dress m__d__s__ly and can face fines or arrest by the m__r__l__ty police. The I__t__r__et is censored, and p__o__e__ts are suppressed to preserve p__b__ic morality and the nation's c__l__u__al identity.

The Islamic Revolution replaced a king called the S_____. Many Iranians opposed the Shah in part because his m__d__r__i__a__i__n programs displeased religious M__s__i__s. When the United States provided the deposed *k_____ medical treatment, Iranian students held 52 Americans h__s__a__e for over a year.

The United States has accused Iran of supporting t__r__o__i__m, in part because of their support for H__z__o__l__h, a group that has called for the destruction of I_____.

Answer in Complete Sentences

2. Why was the Shah unpopular with many Iranian people?

3. Why were the leaders of the Iranian Revolution angry with the United States?

4. Why does the United States have an uneasy relationship with Iran?

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