

"And make not Allah an obstacle to your doing good and guarding against evil and making peace between men."

— Koran 2:224

IRAN'S WOUNDED REGIME under the leadership of the incumbent President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad has been relentless in its persecution of political dissidents and in its imprisonment of activists, advocates, and journalists. On the morning of June 13, 2009 the Islamic Republic News Agency, Iran's official news agency, announced that with two-thirds of the votes counted, the hardliner Ahmadinejad had become re-elected with 63% of the votes cast and that the reformer Mir-Hossein Mousavi had received 33% of the votes cast. Subsequent to the disputed presidential election held on June 12th, Iranian proponents of Mir-Hossein Mousavi took to the streets of Tehran and many other cities to kick off a green revolution. They wanted to claim their votes and protest against the alleged fraud. Their hopes and aspirations for reform have been shattered, but they did not keep quiet. They expressed their anger towards the alleged irregularities during the vote. Political dignitaries abroad voiced doubts about the authenticity of the outcome.

Iranians followed the advice of the reformer Mr. Mir-Hossein Mousavi and launched a green protest rally without committing acts of violence. They relentlessly marched along the streets and chanted the phrase "give us our votes back". The intent was on promoting peace, justice, and non-violence within the Islamic jurisdiction. However, the Basij and the Revolutionary Guard under the ultimate ruling of the supreme leader Ayatollah Khamenei were called on to put an abrupt end to these demonstrations.

During Iran's post-election political unrest, the Basij militia killed and arrested many including Shapour Kazemi, the 62-year old brother of Zahra Rahnavard, Mir-Hossein Mousavi's wife. Kazemi was among thousands of protesters who have been arrested by Iran's militia and police. Protesters instead retaliated against the Basij with their protest marches. They relentlessly chanted the phrases "death to the dictator" and "give us our votes back" and showed their remarkable resilience.

Iran's recent crackdown gives rise to a new awakening; a spirit of hope pervades the entire nation. So far, Mir-Hossein Mousavi has gained the trust of his people and is planning on standing by his people. The hardliner Ahmadinejad is sworn in for a second term on August 5th. This long-held battle of presidential candidacy is a battle of ego and power. Today, with Iran waging a battle of egos between the political candidates, the cry for peace is heard loudly and clearly through massive peaceful demonstrations in the streets of Tehran and nearby cities. Peace is attained not through action but rather through inaction. Peace is an energy that permeates the entire being and is the art of directing the attention inward, surrender-

ing, and suspending judgments.



BONNIE DAVID is an ESL Coach. An Iranian-Canadian, Ms. David takes a genuine interest in the origins and the evolution of language and is proficient in English, French, and Farsi. She has taught ESL to South Koreans and Japanese. Ms. David cultivates a new passion for writing.

CONTACT: bonnie.david@telus.net

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