

An Interview With Ambassador Ardeshir Zahedi

Iran and the United States of America had a history of 165 years of friendly and honest relations

Dr Farida Saba from the Iranian television in USA had the opportunity to interview Ambassador Ardeshir Zahedi in his residence at Villa les Roses, Montreux, Switzerland.

for the three names you mentioned. Any Iranian who follows them must be either brain washed or sick. They are not friends of Iran; they are our enemies and I have no consideration for such

mine.” I believe that this kind of attitude and political game play does not lead anywhere. This is not diplomacy.

The President of the United States hopefully seems to have started to

of 145 years of friendly and honest relations. It is a pity to destroy all that was achieved throughout these decades. Iranian and American people respect each other. These tensions, the flames of this fire are manipulated from far. To be honest, the Iranians have no sense of revenge and the American people have no such intention either. People want peace, understanding and brotherhood this is the direction that the world should take. Trying to impose your ideas on a nation and use of force in relations with other countries is the same story of “whatever is mine is mine and what is yours is also mine.” I have said it time and again that the colonial age of “gunboat diplomacy” is over!

Today America begins to realize that it cannot achieve anything through military threats, sanctions and use of force. They have not known Iran and Iranians. Iranians are lovers of peace and friendship. You smile at them, kiss and hug them and they are ready to give you all they have. You threaten them and they will hit you in the mouth and break your teeth.

Iranians, throughout their long and glorious history, have always defended their honour. This is our history and our dignity. If we continue to insist that we are right and everybody else is wrong, we miss the whole point. The two sides always need



Referring to the long and unique experience of the Ambassador in international diplomacy, she asked him about his views on the current tensions between Iran and the United States and what the Iranians should do under the present circumstances. Should they listen to Trump, Netanyahu and MBS or stand behind the Islamic Republic?

Ambassador Zahedi (AZ): I have no sympathy whatsoever

enemies. I am not a prophet but through common sense and experience I have been convinced that there is no problem that cannot be solved through honest exchanges, dialogue and sincerity.

Once I was talking with Gromyko, the Russian Foreign Minister about the situation in Czechoslovakia. He was a learned and sympathetic man and I had much respect for him. I told him: “*You want to say what is mine, is mine and what is yours is also*

realise this. The people of America themselves are more sensible and closer to realities. America today is distancing from Europe. Other countries that concocted and signed the Nuclear Deal with Iran are making an effort to save the agreement which is ultimately in their own interest and in the interest of the world. This is what they were trying to achieve in Vienna in the recent negotiations.

Iran and the United States of America had a history

Zahedi: Iran and America need each other

The time is for peace, diplomacy and good will

President Carter did not want the fall of the Shah

sincerity and honesty in their relations and through this everything can be achieved; this the only way to peace, cooperation and constructive relations.

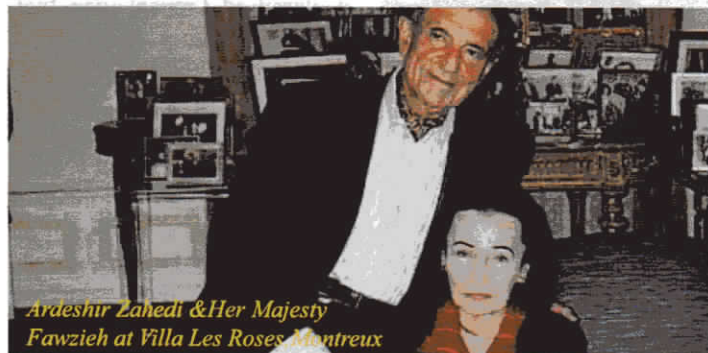
I think we are not far from that or may be this is from my habitual optimism.

FS: What should the people do, pour into the streets and shout they want peace?

AZ: This is the ultimate word.

neighbours. I learnt from my father that we should keep good and friendly relations with our neighbours, love and respect them. Our king also was attached to peace and understanding between nations.

In this room, sometimes known as the Hall of Fame, you see the pictures of many of the leaders of the world. They were almost all like brothers to us and we had



Ardeshir Zahedi & Her Majesty Fawzieh at Villa Les Roses Montreux

Peace and sincerity are the most common and beautiful Iranian words. When someone is leaving on a journey, we wish him peace and security and pray for his protection. This is part of the three-thousand-year-old attitude and mentality of our nation. When sincerity and good will is there life becomes fruitful and pleasant.

In the old days grocery stores were rare and usually far away. We used to go to our neighbours ask for a chicken or some meat when we had unexpected guests. The next day we would pay back by some melons or sugar in exchange. We loved and respected our

mutual respect for each other. Many of the presidents addressed me by my first name and called me "Ardeshir" not His Excellency, or Ambassador or by other official titles. It is obvious that when the two sides have confidence in each other they feel close. Human kind loves peace. Those who are against this noble aspiration are either sick or simply traitors. FS: Unfortunately, the relations of many neighbouring countries with us is not based on that principle.

AZ: This is not the case of all. Besides we should not confuse the attitude of governments with the desires of the people. We

have some neighbours who are under the direct influence or even control of the Americans and the British. This dependence has falsely made them confident and arrogant while the attitude of their people remains warm and friendly. They cannot continue to put everyone in jail because they want peace. If we convince their people of our sincerity, ninety per cent of them are with us in their hearts and minds.

FS: In your view, who could be against peace between Iran and its neighbours?

AZ: Israel would not be happy to see Iran in peace with others. Israel wants to

against Iran, though some are still abusing religion and provoking tensions between the Shiites and Sunnites for their own profiting from the situation.

My Queen, Her Majesty Fawzieh, was Sunnite and no one talked or was worried about it. We had close and intimate relations with all Arab nations. We had our regular pilgrimages to Karbala and Najaf or to Mecca and Medina. Omar Saqqaf, the Saudi foreign minister was like my brother. We were in constant contact and worked hand in hand on the international issues.

Maybe I would not see it



Ardeshir Zahedi honored by City of Montreux - Named «Ambassador of Montreux to the World» 25 January 2019.

expand its territory and America is behind it, supporting all its moves. We had brotherly relations with Syria. When we were at war with Saddam and he had invaded our country, Syrians came to help us. We owe them part of our victory.

Lebanon, where I had some of my education, is and has been a friendly country. Amongst the Arabs, I do not see many who would be

within the remaining days of my life, but we are not far from reaching that goal and returning to the tables of brotherhood.

FS: How do you see the future of Iran and the direction it is taking?

AZ: Iran is moving towards a bright future with its new generation of qualified youth. Success, honour, happiness of people, ➡



*Carter in Iran, from left:Princes Ashraf,Shabanoo,pres.
Carter,The Shah, 1st lady Carter,Prince Gholamreza*

peace and sincerity is in the store. One day this same Americans will need us. And we also need them. The world has become a global village. The seven billion people of the world today depend on each other and are obliged to live together in peace. Look at the Chinese, they have become closest friends of Iran. Politician may be full of tricks and deceptions but people remain honest and sincere, devoted to their human causes. I believe in this though I do not insist for I may be wrong.

FS: It seems that those, who like you, advocate peace are gaining ground.

AZ: Everyone, but those who have lost their minds, wants peace. Iran is a peace-loving nation; the Iranians know the pleasures of living a peaceful life.

FS: Let me go back to the events of 1979 and the Iranian revolution. Many Iranians still believe that Jimmy Carter, the American President, was at the origin of the fall of the Iranian Monarchy.

AZ: Look at the photo behind you.I, took the Shah's son to visit Carter in the White House. Carter had sympathy for Iran. He is a noble man. Iranians sometimes become

was surrounded by a bunch of flatterers and liars and we saw the outcome. It was the Shah himself who told the Iranian Ambassador to go and speak to Khomeini.



Shah and Shahbanoo at the White House

No, Jimmy Carter was not responsible for the fall of the Shah.

FS: Recent documents reveal that Ambassador Sullivan and Jimmy Carter were both trying to boost the morale of the Shah and that to the last moment.

AZ: That was not the case of Sullivan. I had told the Shah from the first moment that Sullivan was not a good Ambassador for Iran. He wrote back to me "We have you, do not worry." He was kind and generous in his mind, but I knew Sullivan was neither capable nor sincere. I had a long meeting

over a private lunch with him before he was sent to

Iran. I was convinced we should not approve of his nomination.

We should remember that the situation in Iran deteriorated rapidly. There were many who wanted to do everything possible to help us. President Carter called the Shah personally to support him. This is what I know and believe in. If there be some who think otherwise and if they have any documents to prove, let them come forth and speak. I told the Shah

what I sincerely thought. For me not to tell the truth was a treason. Carter was not the only president friend of Iran;with other Presidents like Nixon or Ford also we used to sit, defend our interests and reach agreements. They had proved

their good will towards us.

FS: But in one of his meetings with Sullivan, the Shah asks him why he had not contacted the Khomeini Camp and try to get their support for the government of Bakhtiar.

AZ: Sullivan's behaviour was not sincere, deep in his heart he was not with us. He was basically confused. His failures in Vietnam and then in Philippine could explain his attitude. I knew all about him and tried to bring it to the Shah's attention. You can even see in the documents that Carter was considering to dismiss him. After some fifty years we have access to these files, they are mostly declassified. I repeat again that I believe Jimmy carter liked Iran and the Iranians. Maybe at the start of his Presidency he did not have enough experience but we saw him come, at his own initiative and at the crucial moments of our history, to Iran to express his feelings about Iran and his support for the Shah, calling our country "The Island of Stability." I have much respect for him.

FS.Thank you, for your time.

AZ: Thank you, and I am very glad to talk to you.

*Bellow:From left:
Brzezinski,H.E.Zahedi,
Prince Reza,President
Carter, at the White-House*

