

Former U.S. embassy in Tehran gets new decorating job



Tehran, November 3 (RHC)-- Ahead of the 40th anniversary of the U.S. embassy takeover in Tehran, Iran has presented a set of new anti-American murals, 'decorating' the long-closed diplomatic facility.

The murals were unveiled over the weekend by the chief commander of Iran's Revolutionary Guards Corps (IRGC), Major General Hossein Salami, who arrived at the opening ceremony with other officials walking in on a large U.S. flag.

The official said the U.S. has been stuck in a "downward spiral" for years, while anti-American resistance is thriving and growing all across the world. General Salami accused Washington of playing "either directly or indirectly" the main role in all major wars in Muslim countries over the past four decades.

Anti-american murals covered the walls of the former U.S. embassy -- referred to in Iran as the 'Nest of Spies' or 'Den of Espionage' for decades. The new paintings replacing the old artworks feature a dilapidated Statue of Liberty, Mickey Mouse with a smoking gun and fried barb wire from McDonalds.

As well as other paintings, bearing general anti-war and strong anti-U.S. messages. One of them features the Global Hawk spy drone, downed by the Iranians earlier this year. While another one shows an Iran Air passenger jet shot down by the U.S. in 1988 during the Iran-Iraq war. Although the U.S. called the incident a "tragedy," it never acknowledged its guilt or apologized.

New murals were unveiled ahead of the 40th anniversary of the storming of the U.S. embassy that was seized by Iranian university students who backed the Islamic Revolution. The diplomats and several CIA operatives were held hostage at the embassy for over a year, and the standoff led to rupture of U.S.-Iranian relations.

The images, mainly painted in the colors of the US flag, were put on display during a ceremony attended by Major General Hossein Salami, the chief commander of the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC).

One of the 16 murals showed a crumbling Statue of Liberty, its right torch-bearing arm having broken off. Another depicted a revolver with a stars and stripes pattern, but with its barrel drooping downward and a bullet falling out.

A third painting featured Iran's downing of an American Global Hawk drone, illustrated with bats flying out of it.

A fourth showed the triangle of the Eye of Providence in a sea of blood full of floating skulls. A fifth image glorified a soccer goal Iran scored against the U.S. in the 1998 World Cup.

A sixth work showed an Iran Air passenger plane that was shot down by an American warship over the Persian Gulf on July 3, 1988, with white doves flying out of it. As many as 290 people were killed in the criminal act which Washington called a "mistake" and for which Iran has been demanding an apology ever since.

A seventh drawing depicted the Great Seal of the United States, with the eagle holding bullets and drug needles in its claws.

Saber Sheikh-Rezaei, the murals' designer, said the new images share the old political message but are fresher in technique and reflect more recent events. "Many of the original works conveyed an old and dilapidated picture of Tehran and the Iranian people, but the works shown today ... will have a fresh visual language for at least the next 10 to 15 years."

On November 4, 1979, a group of university students took over the embassy, which they believed had turned into a center of espionage, plotting to overthrow the nascent Islamic Republic, and held 52 American diplomats for 444 days.

Documents found at the political mission corroborated claims by the revolutionary students that Washington had been using the compound to hatch plots against Iran.

November 4, which falls on the 13th day of the Iranian calendar month of Aban, is also known as the Student Day and the National Day of the Fight against Global Arrogance.

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