



When Canada pre-emptively expelled Iran's diplomats from Ottawa and [closed its embassy in Tehran](#) last September, some felt this was a hasty move inspired by an overzealous government at best or by pro-Israeli zealots at worst. As critics will say, there may have been alternative methods for dealing with concern over Iran's activity in Canada, such as downsizing their presence as opposed to prohibiting it. But perhaps Canadian officials could see the writing on the wall, as they corroborated their own experience with the Islamic Republic to reports of similar subversive activity throughout the Hemisphere. In the midst of the holiday season, on December 28, 2012, President Barack Obama signed into law the "[Countering Iran in the Western Hemisphere Act of 2012](#)," (H.R. 3783) a bill originally sponsored by Congressman Jeff Duncan (R-SC) that quietly and smoothly swept through both houses before the end of the legislative session. This Act seeks to initiate a whole-of-government approach to what looks to be an increasing threat to the United States, and by extension to Canada as well. Iran is the most ardent state sponsor of terror in the world. The Western Hemisphere has been victim of Iranian terror in the past, as a group of Iranian spies and proxies masterminded the second largest terrorist attack in the Americas, bombing the Israeli embassy and AMIA Jewish community center in 1992 and 1994, respectively, killing a total of 114 people. This attack paved the way for the growing presence of radical Islamists and the feared Iranian revolutionary guards into Latin America. In the past five years, there have been at least two clear-cut cases by which the Islamic Republic has used Latin America to stage attempted terrorist attacks within the United States. The first, and most recent, was foiled on October 11, 2011 when U.S. authorities revealed "[Operation Red Coalition](#)" by arresting two Iranian nationals, charging them with a plot to assassinate the Saudi ambassador to the U.S., Adel al-Jubeir, as he dined in Washington D.C. What was "unusual" in this case was not the claim that Iranians went after a Saudi target on U.S. soil, but rather that they tried to outsource this delicate operation to high-profile Mexican drug cartels. One of the Iranians charged in this case, Mansour Arbabsiar, traveled repeatedly to Mexico to make such arrangements. Fortunately, the source that he thought was a member of a Mexican drug cartel turned out to be a DEA informant. Unbeknownst to Arbabsiar, he continued passing the information up the food chain, as his handler Gholam Shakuri authorized the attack. Shakuri was a member of the Qod's force, the special operations wing of the revolutionary guards — and is still at large. A week before Arbabsiar was to be arrested at New York's John F. Kennedy International Airport, an Imam from Trinidad and Tobago, [Kareem Ibrahim, stood in court to face charges](#) for attempting to blow up this very same airport in 2007. Ibrahim's partner-in-crime was a former Guyanese MP, Abdul Kadir, who maintained a longstanding relationship with the infamous Iranian cleric Mohsen Rabbani. Rabbani is the former cultural attaché of the Iranian embassy in Argentina, and purported mastermind of the Buenos Aires bombings of the 90s. Both Ibrahim and Kadir were arrested in 2007 in Trinidad en route to Venezuela



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where they were going to board a direct flight to Tehran to meet with none other than Rabbani. Ibrahim and Kadir were just [sentenced to life in prison](#) earlier this month. Canada is no stranger to the Islamic terrorist threat. The millennium bomber — Ahmed Ressam, the Toronto 18, and Omar Khadr, among other high profile cases, have brought radical Islam to the forefront of Canadian national security. Prime Minister Stephen Harper has called radical Islam the biggest threat to Canada and promised to diffuse this threat during his administration. Closing the embassy of the Islamic Republic in Ottawa last year shows that Minister Harper is serious on his promise. Michael Petrou, an award-winning journalist from Maclean's magazine, has been at the forefront in presenting compelling evidence to the public about Iran's subversive activity in Canada. In various columns, Petrou has provided plenty of examples of subversion, including connections between [a student group at Carleton University](#) as well as an Islamic cultural center in Toronto, both suspiciously linked to the Iranian embassy in Ottawa. All throughout, Petrou documents cases of Iranian-Canadians being offered all-expense-paid trips to Iran. These same offers and connections are being made throughout the Hemisphere and what Iran does as far south as the Andes has ramifications in Canada and vice versa. For instance, when Canada expelled Iranian diplomats last year, one such diplomat, [Hassan Doutagui](#), hopped on a flight to Ecuador to continue the Iranian mission in the Hemisphere. Ecuador has become one of Iran's largest money-laundering hubs in Latin America. Tehran has adamantly criticized Obama's move to strengthen U.S. efforts towards the Islamic Republic, but the most recent "Countering Iran in the Western Hemisphere Act" presents an opportunity for not only the U.S. but also Canada and Mexico to increase dialogue and cooperation on a threat that permeates all three countries and more. Read the original article [here](#) in the Huffington Post Canada.