# Former Iranian prisoner warns British couple detained in Iran about false confessions



A former Iranian prisoner, Anoosheh Ashoori, has expressed his concerns regarding the detention of British nationals Craig and Lindsay Foreman in Iran, where they are facing espionage charges. Ashoori, who experienced nearly five years of imprisonment in Iran on similar charges, offered advice to the Foremans, urging them to "not submit to making false confessions."

The couple was detained in January 2023 while on a motorcycle journey around the world. Their travel began on December 30, 2022, when they entered Iran from Armenia. Ashoori, a 71-year-old father of two from Lewisham, south-east London, was arrested in August 2017 while visiting his elderly mother in Tehran. He was subsequently convicted of spying for Israel’s Mossad intelligence agency despite having resided in the UK for the last two decades. He was released in April 2022 alongside fellow detainee Nazanin Zaghari-Ratcliffe after the UK Government settled a historical debt of £400 million to Iran.

“I know that they have advised people not to go to Iran, but because Iran is a beautiful country and the people are very hospitable, the temptation is almost irresistible,” Ashoori stated, speaking to the PA news agency. He cautioned that visiting Iran can be perilous, describing the country as a "trap" not worth the risk.

Ashoori noted that the Foremans' decision to make their case public from the outset might afford them a level of protection. “Because they are already made public, and now there is a social awareness, the Iranian regime will think twice about maltreating them,” he added. His own experience involved prolonged periods of solitary confinement and severe interrogation methods, leading to significant psychological trauma, which he continues to contend with.

Reflecting on the political circumstances surrounding arbitrary detentions in Iran, Ashoori speculated that financial motives or potential prisoner exchanges may play a role in the arrests. He urged western nations to unite against what he described as "extortion and hostage-taking" tactics employed by the Iranian authorities.

The Foremans had recently shared their thoughts on social media regarding their journey through Iran, acknowledging the risks involved in travelling to a country against Foreign Office advice. Mrs Foreman stated, “Yes, we’re aware of the risks. But we also know the rewards of meeting incredible people, hearing their stories, and seeing the breathtaking landscapes of these regions could far outweigh the fear."

As part of their travels, Mrs Foreman was conducting a research project aimed at exploring what constitutes a “good life,” with plans to present her findings at a conference on positive psychology in Brisbane later in July.

Official responses from the UK government have emphasised concern over the charges against the Foremans. A spokesman from the Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office (FCDO) reaffirmed their commitment to raising the couple's case with Iranian authorities and providing consular assistance. The FCDO continues to advise against all travel to Iran, warning that possession of a British passport or links to the UK can be sufficient grounds for detention by Iranian officials.

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## Bibliography

1. <https://tribune.com.pk/story/2529388/british-couple-charged-with-espionage-in-iran> - This article corroborates the detention and espionage charges against British nationals Craig and Lindsay Foreman in Iran. It details their arrest in Kerman province and the UK's efforts to provide consular support.
2. <https://www.rferl.org/a/iran-charge-british-couple-spying/33319045.html> - This report confirms the espionage charges against the Foremans, stating they entered Iran as tourists and were detained by the IRGC. It also mentions their global motorbike journey and plans to travel to Australia.
3. <https://www.ibtimes.co.uk/british-couple-detained-iran-ignored-travel-warningsnow-face-years-jail-execution-1731151> - This article highlights the risks faced by the Foremans, including potential prison sentences or execution, and notes that they ignored travel warnings to enter Iran. It also discusses Iran's history of detaining foreign nationals.
4. <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2022/apr/21/nazanin-zaghari-ratcliffe-released-from-iran-prison> - This article provides context on the release of Nazanin Zaghari-Ratcliffe, a British-Iranian dual national, which is relevant to Anoosheh Ashoori's experience and the broader context of British nationals detained in Iran.
5. <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-63344457> - This BBC report would typically cover British nationals detained abroad, including the Foremans, and could provide additional details on their case and the UK's response.
6. <https://www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice/iran> - This UK government webpage advises against all travel to Iran, citing risks of detention, which supports the warnings mentioned in the article about the dangers faced by British nationals like the Foremans.
7. <https://m.belfasttelegraph.co.uk/news/uk/freed-iran-prisoner-tells-detained-britons-not-to-submit-to-false-confessions/a822800655.html> - Please view link - unable to able to access data
8. <https://www.irishnews.com/news/uk/freed-iran-prisoner-tells-detained-britons-not-to-submit-to-false-confessions-J6D3WRJQ5ROE7IKIXERKCLYOAY/> - Please view link - unable to able to access data