

## ***Why Iran Cannot Get A Nuke (II)***

By

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Marc A. Thiessen presents a compelling case for why Iran cannot be allowed to get nuclear weapons, highlighting the deep connections between the Iranian regime and the terrorists of Al-Qaeda, connections stretching over decades and confirmed by documents found in Osama bin Laden's compound ("Why Iran Cannot Get A Nuke," *Union Leader*, Dec. 13, 2011).

But Thiessen presents only part of the case against Iran. As important as Iran's track-record of state-supported terrorism is the truly disturbing world-view of its leaders. The man who founded the Islamic Republic of Iran in 1979, the Ayatollah Khomeini, subscribed to a violent and aggressive form of Islam, teaching his followers that "the Qur'an teaches us to treat as brothers only those who are Muslims...[It] teaches us to treat those who are not...differently; teaches us to hit them, throw them in jail, kill them." Khomeini's biographer, Amer Taheri, tells us that Khomeini was gripped by a hateful and paranoid anti-Semitism, seeing the Jews as the source of almost all the ills of this world. "The Ayatollah was convinced that the central theme of contemporary life was an elaborate and highly complex conspiracy of the Jews – 'who control everything' – to 'emasculate Islam' and dominate the world." Khomeini was committed to the physical destruction of Israel and regarded America as Islam's arch-enemy because he saw it as dominated by "evil Jews." Khomeini used ruthless violence against his political enemies, teaching his disciples that "all means are justified in the service of Allah." Both extreme anti-Semitism and ruthless violence against perceived enemies continue to be hallmarks of the Iranian regime.

As if this were not troubling enough, the current president of Iran, Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, adds his own bizarre brand of Shiite apocalyptic thinking to the regime's ideology. Shiites in general (about 15% of the world's Muslims) believe that the rightful leader of the Muslim community, whom they call the Imam, must be a descendant of Muhammad. (Sunnis, the other 85%, disagree.) Most Iranians are Twelver Shiites who hold that the last Imam was the twelfth one, Muhammad Ibn Hasan Ibn Ali, born in 868 A.D. Their belief is that the Twelfth Imam went into hiding, or "occultation," six years later, in 874 A.D., and that he will come out of hiding again at the end of time when the world is engulfed in chaos, violence, and injustice. His return as the "Mahdi" or messiah will usher in a golden age of peace and justice on earth.

According to Kasra Naji, Ahmadinejad's biographer, since his inauguration in 2005, Ahmadinejad has repeatedly asserted in public his belief that the end of time is near and that the Mahdi will return before his presidency comes to its end in 2013.

Ahmadinejad also believes that his central duty as president is to hasten the return of the Mahdi. Since a world engulfed by chaos and violence is what will trigger the Mahdi's return, it follows that Ahmadinejad would welcome, and perhaps even foment, such conditions. The traditional notions of nuclear deterrence based on "mutual assured destruction" simply will not sway a leader who believes what Mahmoud Ahmadinejad believes about the end of time. Mutual assured destruction is not a deterrent to such a man. It is a positive inducement.

In May 2011, it became public that a major rift has opened up between Mahmoud Ahmadinejad and Ayatollah Khamenei, the Supreme Leader of the Islamic Republic. The Ayatollah Khamenei, as Khomeini's successor, holds to the doctrine that the Shiite clergy should have ultimate control over the government in the absence of the Twelfth Imam. Ahmadinejad, however, now believes that he is in direct contact with the Hidden Imam and that he therefore should be ruling the country without the interference of the Ayatollahs. This, of course, is a threat to the political power of Khamenei and the Shiite clergy, so a power struggle is now underway. It is not clear yet who will come out on top.

Let us all pause to reflect on the following scenario: A ruthless regime gripped by genocidal hatred and committed to the physical destruction of Israel, ruled by an apocalyptic fanatic who is convinced of his own religious mandate to usher in the end times, in possession of ballistic missiles and nuclear weapons.

The world's leaders must not allow this scenario to become reality.