

Iranian Leader Is A Lunatic but Not Crazy

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On Iranian "Jerusalem Day" (established by Ayatollah Khomeini to mourn the fact that it is in "Zionists" hands) the Iranian president, Ahmadinejad, stated that "Very Soon, This Stain of Disgrace [i.e. Israel] Will Vanish from the Center of the Islamic World and This is Attainable." It is worth reading the complete speech (available on MEMRI's site) in order to disabuse anyone from the notion that this was just a (non Freudian) slip.

He is not the first to issues such threats. Rafsanjani did so four years ago and Khomeini did so when he came to power. And indeed, the following day Ahmadinejad repeated his threats in no equivocal terms. On October 29 pro-Iranians marched German soil to support his statement and to attack the UN Security Council condemnation. On the same day the Iranians denied there was such a threat: "The Islamic Republic of Iran is committed to its U.N. charter commitments. It has never used force against a second country or threatened the use of force." Of course, in their mind Israel is not a country and the fact that it has not threatened a "second country" in the past does not mean it will not try to destroy it in the future.

In addition to the Security Council's condemnation of the Iranian threat, world-wide condemnation was heard from the leaders of Germany, UK, and many others but not from the Arab and Muslim World. Hence the danger. The West will forget about this threat, if it ever noticed it, as soon as a scandal, sport scores, or stock market news are published. But the Iranian president boldly found out what Hitler has experience in 1938 and 1939: The more you push the envelope the more you can proceed without being stopped. Note that he calls Israel "Stain of Disgrace," that he promises to annihilate it soon, and he believes it is achievable.

As with Hitler who did not stop with Czechoslovakia (that the West was all too happy to sacrifice - believing that will stop him), neither will the Iranian excuse-for-a-president stop with Israel. Note how he references Israel: "This occupying country [i.e. Israel] is in fact a front of the World of Arrogance in the heart of the Islamic world. They have in fact built a bastion [Israel] from which they can expand their rule to the entire Islamic world... This means that the current war in Palestine is the front line of the Islamic world against the World of Arrogance, and will determine the fate of Palestine for centuries to come."

Saying that Hitler was a lunatic may have explained his drive but not his power to do damage. The Iranian logic rests on a world-view that is hundred of years old and is strongly backed by religious leaders from Riyadh, Gaza, and Malaysia, as well as their brethren preachers in London, Paris, and New York. Ahmadinejad may be a lunatic but he is not crazy. He is one of the most powerful people in the world and when (not if) he drops the bomb on Israel it will be too late to reverse that action although I can see a lot of learned Mideast scholars celebrating in professional conferences and others piously deep in thought about how did this ever happen.

A friend commented to me that "...the first time we even smell a nuclear weapon in Iran, you will think the end of the world has arrived." Let me suggest that if we "smell it" we are already too late. What should not be allowed is the kind of rhetoric used by the Iranian leader because if he dares say it he will dare do it. He needs to know that there is a very high cost to pay for such utterances. An economy of scale that will nullify his intentions. Being rebuked by the Security Council and by various world leaders, and their ambassadors, does not move him even a bit. Nothing short of an ultimatum that stipulates he has to relinquish his nuclear aspirations and has to absolutely cease the use of his vile rhetoric will suffice. If such an ultimatum is not issued he will undoubtedly - as all signs indicate - go on to realize his threat. Again, the free world will "eventually" do the right thing but at what terrible cost.

Leaders of the terrorist kind need to know they cannot get away with such policies. If they will not be taught that lesson they will keep at it until they are victorious. Not an option we can afford.