



Interview With Director Joel Gilbert

Why do you believe Ahmadinejad is preparing a "Coming War for Islamic Revival"? □

President Ahmadinejad's speech at the United Nations last September was nothing less than a declaration of war against America. In my film, you'll see excerpts from many Ahmadinejad speeches in which he highlights a similar message: Islamic civilization is morally superior and destined to ultimate success, while America is a corrupt, immoral and godless society whose core values of liberalism and capitalism are the source of all oppression, wars, and poverty in the world. Meanwhile, the Islamic world is ordained by God and His messengers to fight for equality, justice and fraternity. Ahmadinejad is very clear that America must be destroyed for humanity to find salvation.

Why don't you believe Iran's nuclear program is for peaceful purposes? □

Ahmadinejad has stated that nuclear technology is the key to Iran becoming "an invincible global power." Given Iran's Islamist agenda, this can only mean one thing - Iran will use its nuclear capabilities to shape the world according to the Islamist agenda. In addition, Iran is rich in oil and does not need nuclear energy. Most glaringly, Iran does not have sufficient facilities to convert nuclear fuel into electricity, while the clandestine nature of Iran's underground nuclear facilities at Natanz and Qom speaks volumes.

What is "Islamic Revival" and what is the Islamist agenda? □

Since its Islamic revolution of 1979, Iran has been the undisputed leader of Islamism, the worldwide movement that seeks revival of Muslim society from 300 years of decline. Islamists believe that only by returning to the roots of their success, traditionalism, can Islam return to past glory and lead humanity to salvation. In Islam, worldly events on a political level are an affirmation of faith. Therefore, as a devout Muslim, Ahmadinejad must strive to use all means to spread Islamic values and reaffirm God's covenant with the Believers. Hence, the name of my film, Atomic Jihad.

What do you mean by President Obama's "*Politics of Defeat*"? □

President Obama is pursuing a "new beginning" in U.S. relations with the Muslim world based on what he describes as the "shared hopes and common dreams" of America and Islam. This reveals a fundamental misunderstanding of both the Muslim world view and Islamist agenda. In addition, Obama is committed to diplomacy with Iran as a means to achieve nuclear compromise. His core belief is that once people start speaking, their differences disappear as they realize their "common aspirations." However, Islamism and Western secular society have little in common, while Islamic religious values cannot be changed by "talk" nor bought by economic incentives. In modern history, Obama's approach recalls the appeasement policies and naïveté of British Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain prior to World War II. Chamberlain met with Adolph Hitler several times, believing "talk" would melt away differences. I believe we are living in similar times - an appeaser is the leader of the free world, while a uncompromising force is acquiring the means to change the balance of power to achieve a worldwide reality antipathetical to Western democracy while seeking ultimate victory over the West.

Why doesn't President Obama understand the Islamic world view?

Unfortunately, it is a natural tendency to dismiss ideas and values that are not understood or shared. Because the West considers its development of concepts of "democracy," "freedom," and "secularism" as the highest advancement of humanity, it has great difficulty accepting that its values don't apply to other cultures or religions.

How has this misunderstanding affected U.S. foreign policy?

There are many examples. In 1979, Jimmy Carter withdrew support from our ally, the Shah of Iran, and more recently the Bush administration did the same with our ally Pervez Musharraf in Pakistan. Both presidents mistakenly believed the removal of these autocrats would result in the break out of Western secular democracy. The Iraq and Afghanistan military operations are based on the same misunderstanding, that democracy and secularism will emerge with the removal of "tyranny." However, the reality is that Islamism is the only serious alternative form of government in the Islamic world and meets the aspirations of the vast majority of all Muslims.

If you are correct, what will become of the American efforts in Iraq and Afghanistan? □

Iran and its Islamist allies are eagerly waiting to fill the balance of power vacuum when the United States withdraws its forces from Iraq and Afghanistan. I believe the U.S. sponsored governments will collapse within weeks of an American departure. While "reform" from the Western point of view means free elections leading to secular democracy, "reform" in the Muslim world means removal of Western influences and return to Islamic government.

Can the IAEA's negotiations convince Iran to limit or abandon its nuclear program? □

Iranians of all ages consider the procurement of nuclear technology a national cause and a path to restore historic Islamic scientific and engineering prowess, while attempts by the West to suppress their progress are viewed as colonialism. Therefore, Iran will not give up nor make real compromise in its quest for nuclear capabilities.

Do you believe the U.S. or Israel will attack Iran's nuclear facilities? □

President Obama's policy is to withdraw American forces from Iraq and Afghanistan (and close Gitmo) as soon as possible to further two goals: improvement of relations with the Islamic world and fulfillment of a costly domestic agenda that includes health care reform and economic recovery. An attack on Iran would derail Obama's domestic agenda and probably his entire presidency, so an American attack is extremely unlikely and the Iranians know it. As for Israel, its very doubtful they would risk Iranian retaliation against U.S. bases and forces within easy reach of Iranian ballistic missiles in Iraq, Afghanistan and the Gulf.

Can you describe what the world would be like with a nuclear Iran? □

It would dramatically change the balance of power equation in the Middle East and beyond. Initially, we'll see Iran's allies like Hezbollah, Hamas and Syria become more aggressive, then Iran itself as they enjoy a "strategic umbrella". That means the United States will be more hesitant to project its power to protect its interests and allies, knowing an Iranian nuclear threat exists. One cannot ignore the fact that Iran's Islamist revolution was born with and to this day maintains a purpose, "Death to America." This is not a mere slogan, but a raison d'etre. There is no reason to believe Iran would suddenly change its agenda once it acquired the means to achieve its goals. Ahmadinejad makes it very clear that nuclear technology for Iran is an important step on the path to fulfillment of much larger goals - restoring Islamic power and paving the way for the return of the Mahdi to save mankind.