



THE IRANIAN TIME BOMB

By Michael A. Ledeen

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Iran declared war on the United States in early 1979, when the shah was overthrown and the revolutionary regime of the Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini came to power. That war has been waged ever since, with devastating effect, writes Michael A. Ledeen in his latest book, *The Iranian Time Bomb* (St. Martin's Press, September 2007). New evidence emerges almost daily about Iranian support for terrorists in Iraq, Gaza, Lebanon, Afghanistan, and Europe, and regime officials have been indicted for murder in Argentina, Austria, and Germany.

The author chronicles Iranian responsibility for the mass murder of Americans, which extends from the suicide bombings of the U.S. embassy and marine barracks in Beirut, Lebanon, in 1983, to the Khobar Towers bombing in Saudi Arabia in 1996, and from the intimate working relationship between Iran and several of the 9/11 terrorists, to the training, funding, and arming of terrorists (including al Qaeda) who are killing Americans and their allies in Iraq and Afghanistan.

Indeed, as Ledeen demonstrates in *The Iranian Time Bomb*, the relationship between Iran and al Qaeda over the years has been so close that it is difficult today not to conclude that Iran was involved in the 9/11 attacks.

Yet despite voluminous evidence of Iran's involvement in the killing of Americans, Ledeen points out that there still has not been an effective American response. U.S. presidents, from Jimmy Carter to George W. Bush, came to believe in the possibility of negotiating a "grand bargain" with the Iranian regime. In fact, the last five American presidents have negotiated with Iran, and some—in particular Carter and Ronald Reagan—even sent arms to the mullahs. Bill Clinton used Iran to arm secretly the Bosnians, in violation of a United Nations embargo, and then clandestinely permitted the Russians to sell weapons to the mullahs and support the Iranian nuclear program, even though it violated an American law coauthored by his own vice president, Al Gore.

Michael A. Ledeen—whose work on Iran began shortly after the 1979 Iranian Revolution, when he coauthored *Debauch: The American Failure in Iran*—argues that the central issue is the Iranian war against America rather than the mullahs' race to acquire a nuclear arsenal. Pointing to the ongoing revolt of the Iranian people as proof that a democratic revolution can succeed if it receives the kind of support that America provided to Soviet dissidents during the Cold War, Ledeen advocates that the United States work toward peaceful regime change in Tehran.

In *The Iranian Time Bomb*, Ledeen warns that:

- There are two ticking clocks in Iran today: the countdown to Iran's nuclear arsenal, and the systematic failure of the regime at home. The destiny of the region, and perhaps the world at large, will likely be determined by which deadline arrives first;
- If there is no peaceful change in the current Iranian regime, the United States will be faced with two terrible alternatives: either accommodate a nuclear Iran determined to create a global caliphate modeled on the bloodthirsty regime in Tehran, or bomb Iran and deal with all the unpredictable consequences that entails;
- There will never be adequate security in Iraq so long as Iran is in the grips of the theocratic fascist regime now in power. While it is understandable that policymakers do not want to face this mortal threat, there is no way out. The mullahs have proven they will attack us until they either win or lose.

The Iranian Time Bomb is a clear, concise, and brutally honest assessment of the life-and-death struggle we now face.

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