



Iran's Murderous Course

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"If setting fire to embassies of countries that insult the Prophet aims to show that these countries no longer have any place in Islamic countries then this act is permissible." [So says](#) Ayatollah Dorri Najaf-Abadi, the Chief State Prosecutor of Iran, in ruling in favor of burning down the embassies of countries in which newspapers print the notorious Muhammad cartoons. It is not surprising that the regime that triggered the Iranian Hostage Crisis of 1979 would deny the sanctity of embassies, but the Ayatollah's words here fit into a larger pattern in Iran. According to the dissident Iranian publication [Rooz](#), as reported by the [Middle East Media Research Institute](#), Shi'ite clerics in the religious center of Qom have endorsed the use of nuclear weapons as well: "Mohsen Gharavian, a disciple of [Ayatollah] Mesbah Yazdi [who is Iranian President Ahmadinejad's spiritual mentor],

has spoken for the first time of using nuclear weapons as a counter-measure. He stated that 'in terms of the shari'a, it all depends on the goal.'"

Islamic spokesmen in the West like to compare the Islamic doctrine of jihad to the Catholic Church's just war doctrine. However, the Catechism of the Catholic Church, in stating this doctrine in its modern form, [stipulates](#) that "the use of arms must not produce evils and disorders graver than the evil to be eliminated. The power of modern means of destruction weighs very heavily in evaluating this condition." And moreover, "the extermination of a people, nation, or ethnic minority must be condemned as a mortal sin. One is morally bound to resist orders that command genocide. Every act of war directed to the indiscriminate destruction of whole cities or vast areas with their inhabi-

tants is a crime against God and man, which merits firm and unequivocal condemnation. A danger of modern warfare is that it provides the opportunity to those who possess modern scientific weapons - especially atomic, biological, or chemical weapons -- to commit such crimes."

In other words, all this is the polar opposite of "it all depends on the goal." And the anti-genocide language contrasts sharply with Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad's repeated threats to [destroy Israel utterly](#): "We ask the West to remove what they created sixty years ago and if they do not listen to our recommendations, then the Palestinian nation and other nations will eventually do this for them."

In his landmark book *The Abolition of Man*, the Christian apologist C. S. Lewis (1898-1963) assembled examples of what he called the Tao, or the Natural Law: principles held by people in a wide variety of cultures and civilizations. These principles include "Duties to Parents, Elders, Ancestors"; "Duties to Children and Posterity"; The Law of Good Faith and Veracity;" "The Law of Magnanimity"; and more. He illustrates the universality of these principles by quotations from sources as diverse as the Old Testament, the New Testament, Virgil's *Aeneid*, the Bhagavad Gita, Confucius' *Analects*, the writings of Australian Aborigines, and many others. But completely missing are any quotations from the Qur'an or other Muslim sources.

Lewis may have found that traditional Islam simply does not uphold what he calls "The Law of General Beneficence"; one is not to be charitable except to fellow believers. To be sure, Lewis could have quoted a hadith in which the Muslim Prophet Muhammad says: "Whoever wishes to be delivered from the fire and enter the garden should die with faith in Allah and the Last Day and should treat the people as he wishes to be treated by them" (Sahih Muslim 4546). This certainly appears to affirm the Law of General Beneficence. But it is contravened by so many other passages in the Qur'an and Hadith that make such a sharp distinction between believers and unbelievers (the "vilest of creatures" according to Qur'an 98:6) that it becomes an essentially empty statement, or one in which "the people" to which Muhammad refers are understood as Muslims only. After all, "Muhammad is Allah's Apostle. Those who follow him are ruthless to the unbelievers but merciful to one another" (Qur'an 48:29).

"In terms of the shari'a, it all depends on the goal" -- and that goal for the Iranian regime and the global jihad movement is to be ruthless to the unbelievers and to fight against non-Muslims "until they pay the Jizya [the non-Muslim poll tax] with willing submission, and feel themselves subdued" (Qur'an 9:29) under the hegemony of Islamic law. Anything that may advance that goal -- nuclear weapons, burning embassies -- is permitted. If Paradise is guaranteed to those who "slay and are slain" for Allah (Qur'an 9:111), there is no downside

to a nuclear attack on Israel or even on American troops in Iraq, even if it draws a crushing retaliation.

The Iranian regime is, in short, operating without any moral compass whatsoever that would prevent it from making decisions that could result in catastrophic destruction. Westerners may find it hard to be-

lieve that this cleric-controlled regime would so cravenly trample upon what are accepted in the non-Muslim world as universal moral principles; but in Tehran "it all depends on the goal." In Washington the goal should be to prevent the mullahs from attaining theirs, before it's too late.

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