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## Our war with Iran

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The new president of Iran, Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, made international headlines last Wednesday by declaring that "Israel must be wiped off the map." Leaders from around the world tut-tutted that such things really should not be said, ignoring the fact that this goal has been a cornerstone of Iranian policy -- and, for that matter, that of a number of other states -- for years.

The blood-chilling threat to Israel overshadowed another statement by the one-time Iranian "student" whose cohort seized American hostages in 1979. Mr. Ahmadinejad declared in the same speech: "Is it possible for us to witness a world without America and Zionism? . . . You had best know that this slogan and this goal are attainable, and surely can be achieved."

In other words, Tehran's Islamofascists like Mr. Ahmadinejad are as focused today as they were at the time 26 years ago when, in the midst of the Iranian revolution, they sacked our embassy and seized our diplomats. The main enemy -- the "Great Satan" -- for Iran's regime remains the United States. Unless prevented from doing so, it will persist, both on its own and in league with others, to bring about our destruction, as well as that of other freedom-loving people.

Regrettably, this agenda is being largely underwritten by profits the mullahs are obtaining from their oil sales. Thanks to the recent near-tripling of the price per barrel, Iran is now receiving on the order of \$125 million more every day in what amounts to found-money.

As with the Saudis (whose corresponding windfall is roughly \$500 million per day), at least some of these funds are supporting Iranian-sponsored terrorists and financing Tehran's accelerating weapons of mass destruction programs.

The latter have benefited greatly from our European friends.

The so-called EU-3 -- Britain, France and Germany -- have tried to appease the mullahs into giving up the nuclear weapons program that the Iranian regime is making less and less effort to conceal. Emboldened by the absence of real penalties (or, for that matter, any adverse consequences), Iranian spokesmen have taken to talking openly -- and gleefully -- about how European diplomacy has "bought time" to bring their nuclear program to fruition. Worse yet, they now have advertised their willingness to share Iran's nuclear technology with other Islamic nations.

The time thus squandered has also allowed Iran to diversify its customer base, bringing China and even democratic India in as major investors in Iran's state-controlled oil sector and purchasers of its products. Thanks to this arrangement, Tehran has obtained political protection, non-Western revenue streams and sources of advanced weaponry.

The menace arising from the Iranian regime can no longer be ignored, any more than its president's rhetoric can be discounted as bluster or considered untroubling since news accounts suggest it is directed at Israel alone. The Shi'ite Islamofascists in Tehran, like their Sunni counterparts supported by Saudi Arabia, mean what they say about imposing an international Caliphate under a Taliban-style Sharia law. And they are deadly serious about the fact that countries like ours that stand in the way will have to be wiped from the map, too.

Whether we recognize it or not, this totalitarian ideology is at war with us. And, if we wish to survive, we have no choice but to wage total war against it.

Fortunately, in the case of Iran, we clearly have natural allies in the Iranian people. They are as anxious to dispatch the despotic mullahs who repress them, and threaten us, as we are.

For this reason among others, we should resist as long as possible resorting to military means against the Iranian regime, lest we drive even a public who hates the radical, politicized mullahs into their arms.

The United States should, instead, lead the Free World in wielding three other instruments against our enemies in Tehran. We should:

- Wage political warfare. The United States has largely failed to utilize the sorts of techniques that Ronald Reagan employed to delegitimize Soviet communism and to empower its foes within the USSR.

Among other things, Americans need to bring to bear the political tradecraft we usually use against one another in our electoral campaigns to defeat our Islamofascist foes.

- Divest terror. American investors hold hundreds of billions of dollars worth of stocks in companies that partner with Iran, the other Islamofascist regimes and their friends. The South Africa divestment campaign and "socially responsible" investing have demonstrated that, by redirecting investments into corporations that do not engage in unacceptable practices, real pressure for change can be brought to bear. (For more on how, see [www.DivestTerror.org](http://www.DivestTerror.org).)

- Start weaning the Free World from oil. Without oil revenues, the Islamofascists would be far less formidable foes. We have no choice now but to achieve energy security by using existing transportation technologies to run on alternative fuels like ethanol, methanol and electricity, made from Free World sources. (The blueprint for doing so is at [www.SetAmericaFree.org](http://www.SetAmericaFree.org)).

As Mr. Ahmadinejad knows, we have a stark choice: a world without America, or one without Islamofascism. The latter goal is attainable and surely must be achieved.

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