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from the introduction



JOEL C. ROSENBERG
INSIDE THE



REVOLUTION



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Inside the Revolution: How the Followers of Jihad, Jefferson & Jesus Are Battling to Dominate the Middle East and Transform the World

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*To Caleb, Jacob, Jonah and Noah,
our revolutionaries in training*

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note to readers

ALTHOUGH THERE ARE a number of different ways to spell the name of the founder of Islam, I have chosen for clarity and simplicity to use the standard spelling “Muhammad.” In the case of those individuals cited in the book who go by the same name, I use the spelling of their choice. Some prefer “Mohammed”; others prefer “Mohammad.”

In addition, while there are several ways to spell the name of the book Muslims believe contains their Islamic scriptures, I have chosen for clarity and simplicity to use the standard spelling “Qur’an.” The specific edition cited throughout this book is *The Qur’an with Annotated Interpretation in Modern English* by Ali Unal, produced by Light Publishers in New Jersey in 2006. This edition was both given to me and recommended to me as the best English translation by my friend Dr. Ahmed Abaddi, one of the top Muslim scholars in Morocco.

Unless otherwise noted, citations from the Bible throughout this book are from the New American Standard translation of *The Holy Bible*. I note the use of other translations with the abbreviation “NIV” for the New International Version and “KJV” for the King James Version.

introduction

NOT “IF” BUT “WHEN”

ON APRIL 1, 1979, Iran became the first Islamic republic in history.

Three decades later, the shock waves from the Iranian Revolution are still being felt around the globe. Iran today is the most dangerous terrorist state on the face of the planet. What’s more, we are rapidly approaching the most dangerous moment in the history of the Iranian Revolution.

Iran’s senior leaders have taught in recent years that the Revolution is now reaching its climax. They have stated publicly that the end of the world is “imminent.” They have taught that the way to hasten the arrival or appearance on earth of the Islamic messiah known as the “Twelfth Imam,” or the “Mahdi,” is to destroy Israel, which they call the “Little Satan,” and the United States, which they call the “Great Satan.” They have vowed to annihilate the United States and Israel and have urged Muslims to envision a world without America and Zionism. They have come to believe that Allah has chosen them to create chaos and carnage on the planet.

The key leaders in Iran seem hell-bent on accomplishing their apocalyptic, genocidal mission. They are feverishly trying to build, buy, or steal nuclear weapons. Iran is actively testing advanced ballistic missiles capable of delivering nuclear warheads. Tehran is building alliances with

Russia, China, and North Korea—all nuclear-armed powers—and has cooperated on the development of offensive and defensive weapons systems with those countries.

Iran's leaders are building a network of thousands of suicide bombers ready to strike American targets. They are sending suicide bombers and other insurgents, money, and weapons into Iraq to kill Iraqis as well as American and Coalition forces. They are harboring scores of al Qaeda terrorists and leaders inside Iranian cities and allowing terrorists to criss-cross their territory. They are making a concerted effort to enlarge the reach of terrorist operations by building strategic alliances with other jihadist organizations, regardless of their theological differences.

The Iranian leaders are digging hundreds of thousands of new graves in Iran itself to bury the enemies of Islam. They are calling for the unification of the Islamic world politically and economically, including the creation of a single currency. They are aggressively exporting their Islamic Revolution to countries throughout the Middle East and around the world.

Put simply, the leaders of Iran believe that Allah is on their side, the wind is at their back, and the end of Judeo-Christian civilization as we know it is near.

I believe just the opposite. As an evangelical Christian with a Jewish father and a Gentile mother, I worship the God of the Bible—the God of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, who is also the God of the New Testament. I do not believe that God is on the side of the zealots that run Iran. Rather, I believe that the end of their reign of terror is increasingly close at hand. Every day I pray for the peace of Jerusalem. Every day I pray for peace throughout the Middle East. What's more, I pray for the salvation of the leaders of Iran and the salvation of their terrorist allies, and I encourage others to do the same. And because I serve a prayer-hearing and prayer-answering God, a wonder-working God of miracles, I firmly believe that God in His grace can change the leadership in Iran.

That said, the God of the Bible may have other plans. If, in His sovereignty, He chooses not to remove the Radicals from Iran peacefully, then I believe a major, cataclysmic war or series of wars is coming soon as a direct result of the Iranian Revolution that was set into motion by the Ayatollah Khomeini in 1979. The United States, NATO, Israel, or

some combination thereof could initiate a preemptive strike to neutralize the Iranian nuclear threat. If they do not, Iran will soon be poised to launch the apocalyptic war required by its theology to destroy the West and usher in the end of days. The question we all must be asking is not *if* there will be war with Iran but *when* it will begin and *who* will strike first.

A CLEAR AND PRESENT DANGER

Iran, however, is not the only threat.

Osama bin Laden and his al Qaeda terrorist network remain a clear and present danger to the national security and economic vitality of the United States, the State of Israel, and our Western allies. While al Qaeda has certainly been badly damaged by U.S. and Coalition forces in recent years, they are by no means defeated. Rather, they are doing everything they can to reconstitute themselves in Afghanistan, Iraq, Pakistan, North Africa, and elsewhere around the world. They are building new alliances, recruiting new jihadists, raising more money, acquiring more weapons, and plotting new attacks.

For the past several years, many Americans, Canadians, Europeans, and others have asked, “Why are the Americans at war in Iraq and Afghanistan when they have not been hit by any terrorist attacks inside the borders of the United States since September 11, 2001? What’s the point of all this fighting if the American people are no longer in danger?” This sentiment reveals a fundamental misunderstanding of the history of the last eight years and of the jihadists’ intentions and preparations. True, as of this writing, the U.S. homeland has not been hit with terrorist attacks since 9/11, but that is not because the jihadists are not trying.

There are actually three reasons we have not been hit again—not yet, at least.

First, the U.S. and our allies are getting significantly better at identifying terrorist plots early and intercepting them before they can be set into motion. Indeed, dozens of terror plots have been foiled by U.S. and allied intelligence and law enforcement agencies in recent years. I will recount several of those disrupted operations along the way, and I have included more such successes in an appendix to this book.

Second, after 9/11, the U.S. and our allies remained on offense against the jihadists throughout the years President George W. Bush served in office. We were not waiting to be hit, as we seemed to be doing prior to 9/11. We took the fight to the enemy in Iraq and Afghanistan rather than wait for the jihadists to come to us. In the process, we effectively created in Iraq and Afghanistan two magnets that drew local and international jihadists into contact with the best-trained and best-equipped militaries in the history of mankind. These battles have not been easy. Thousands of brave American and Coalition men and women have sacrificed their lives to defeat the jihadists overseas. But to date we have been winning. From 2003 to 2008, for example, our forces killed nearly 20,000 terrorists and insurgents and captured more than 25,000 in Iraq alone.¹ That means some 45,000 Radical Islamic jihadists are now unable to travel west, infiltrate the United States, and strike inside our borders.

That said, there is a third reason why we have not yet been hit again, and it is a sobering one, to say the least: al Qaeda is planning larger attacks. Senior al Qaeda leaders no longer want to merely frighten us; they want to annihilate us. They no longer seek only to inflict minor damage on planes, trains, buses, restaurants, malls, and other “soft targets” that have little or no external security. Rather, they are plotting to inflict catastrophic damage on the U.S. and our allies.

To accomplish their objectives, the Radicals need weapons of mass destruction. They need more accurate ballistic missiles and long-range missiles capable of reaching all of Europe and the United States. They need followers who are religiously and ideologically committed to helping them carry out their plans and—if at all possible—infiltrate the American homeland and set off catastrophic attacks from the inside.

What they need most—what they pray for most of all—is Western ignorance, apathy, and lack of moral clarity. If the West can be lulled to sleep, if free people the world over can somehow be prevented from understanding the true goals and objectives of the Radicals and mobilizing to take all necessary actions to prevent their success, then the Radicals will soon be able to pull off a series of attacks that make 9/11 pale by comparison and could leave millions dead, not thousands.

NOT ONE REVOLUTION BUT THREE

Thirty years after the rise of the Ayatollah Khomeini to power in Iran, it has become clear to me that there is not simply one Revolution under way; there are three. Each is pursued with equal passion and vigor by groups I define as the “Radicals,” the “Reformers,” and the “Revivalists.” And with the stakes so high—and time so short—there are important questions to be answered, and fast.

How, for example, can citizens and leaders in the West properly understand and counter the threat Islamic Radicals pose to Judeo-Christian civilization? How can we understand what is really going on inside the minds of the Radicals? When they read the Qur’an, what verses drive them to rob, kill, and destroy? Is there any way to persuade them to not carry out their apocalyptic agendas? Diplomacy has not worked so far, but might direct negotiations at the highest possible level—president to president—work? Or is that a fool’s errand?

At the same time, are there any Muslim leaders pushing back against the jihadists? Are there any leaders who think the Radicals are crazy and dangerous and who are willing to say so? If so, who are they? What verses in the Qur’an do these Reformers point to in making their case that Islam is a “religion of peace”? What are their personal stories? How did they climb to power, and why don’t we hear more about them in the media? Do such Reformers really have any chance at remaking the modern Middle East and winning the war of ideas—as well as the war of bullets and bombs—with the Radicals?

What’s more, are war and politics the only prescriptions for what ails the people of the Middle East today? Are there any sources of true hope? Is Christianity really dying out in the lands of its birth, as many claim, or is it true that more Muslims are coming to faith in Jesus Christ today than at any other time in history? Is there any evidence that Christianity is surging in the epicenter? Who are the Revivalists, and what is the message of spiritual hope and change they are trying to spread? And if Muslims are converting to Christianity in record numbers as some have suggested, what are the implications of this trend for the Church in the West and around the world?

These are questions I have often been asked since the 9/11 attacks, as I have written fiction and nonfiction books about events in the

Middle East, been interviewed hundreds of times by U.S. and foreign media outlets, and had the honor of speaking to audiences around the world. What follow are the answers I have found and the conclusions I have drawn after traveling to Iraq, Afghanistan, Egypt, Jordan, Turkey, Morocco, the United Arab Emirates, central Asia, Israel, the West Bank, Europe, and Canada, as well as throughout the U.S., doing research and meeting with key participants inside these ongoing Revolutions.

In the pages ahead, you will hear key leaders of each movement making their own cases and speaking in their own words. You will read direct quotes taken from the speeches, textbooks, memoirs, manifestos, Web sites, and videos written or produced by the Radicals, Reformers, and Revivalists themselves. You will see verses from the books they consider holy. You will find excerpts from captured and intercepted memos and diaries they have written. I have also quoted transcripts of previously classified interrogation sessions and from exclusive, never-before-published interviews, many of which I conducted myself. You will also hear from those who have devoted their lives to hunting or confronting the Radicals, including presidents, prime ministers, CIA directors, intelligence operatives, military leaders, and members of Congress, as well as Americans who have been directly impacted by terrorist attacks.

Among those whom I had the privilege of personally interviewing during the course of researching this book:

Porter Goss, Director of the Central Intelligence Agency (2004–2006) and chairman of the House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence (1997–2004)

Lieutenant General (ret.) William “Jerry” Boykin, U.S. Deputy Undersecretary of Defense for Intelligence and Special Warfighting (2003–2007), former commander of Delta Force, and author of *Never Surrender: A Soldier’s Journey to the Crossroads of Faith and Freedom*

L. Paul Bremer III, presidential envoy to Iraq and first U.S. administrator after liberation (2003–2004), and author of *My Year in Iraq: The Struggle to Build a Future of Hope*

- Fred Schwien**, senior advisor to U.S. Homeland Security Secretary Michael Chertoff
- Lynn Derbyshire**, chief spokeswoman for the families of the U.S. Marines killed in the Beirut truck bombing of 1983
- Alireza Jafarzadeh**, Iranian dissident and author of *The Iran Threat: President Ahmadinejad and the Coming Nuclear Crisis*
- Mala Bakhtyar**, spokesman for Iraqi president Jalal Talabani
- Qubad Talabani**, son of Iraqi President Jalal Talabani and the official representative in Washington, D.C., for the Kurdistan Regional Government
- Samir Sumaida'ie**, Iraq's ambassador to the United States
- Falakaddin Kakaye**, Minister of Culture, Kurdistan Regional Government of Iraq
- Dr. Ahmed Abaddi**, Morocco's Director of Islamic Affairs
- Dr. Ahmed Khamlichi**, director of Morocco's leading Islamic seminary
- Khalid Zerouali**, Director of Border Security, Morocco's Interior Ministry
- Abdelsalam al-Majali**, Prime Minister of Jordan (1993–1995 and 1997–1998)
- Benjamin Netanyahu**, Prime Minister of Israel (1996–1999)
- General Moshe Ya'alon**, Chief of Staff of the Israeli Defense Forces (2002–2005)
- Dore Gold**, Israeli ambassador to the United Nations (1997–1999) and senior advisor to Prime Minister Ariel Sharon (2001–2003)
- Hormoz Shariat**, member of the Iranian Revolution in 1979 who later converted to Christianity, set up a satellite television ministry, and is now one of the best-known evangelists in Iran
- Taysir Saada**, former Palestinian terrorist who converted to Christianity and now runs an evangelical ministry called Hope for Ishmael
- Over 150 Arab and Iranian pastors and ministry leaders, including former Islamic jihadists who have converted to Christianity

Dozens of Arab and Iranian prodemocracy dissidents
 Western and Middle Eastern intelligence officials, both active
 and retired
 Western and Middle Eastern diplomats, both active and retired

Some of these spoke to me specifically for *Inside the Revolution*. Others spoke to me for other books and articles I have written over the years. As with my previous nonfiction book, *Epicenter*, I should note that not all of these sources will agree with the analysis and conclusions found in the pages ahead, but I am exceedingly grateful for their valuable time and helpful insights. I have no doubt this book is richer for the assistance they provided.

A FINAL NOTE

Before you begin your journey inside the Revolution, allow me to briefly describe three other groups of people that are important to our story. They do not receive much direct attention in this book as they are not in and of themselves Revolutionaries. But at least a cursory awareness of who these groups are and how they fit into the overall picture is vital, I believe, in understanding the broader context of the current dynamics in the Middle East. I speak here of groups I call the “Resisters,” the “Reticent,” and the “Rank-and-File.”

The Resisters are leaders of Muslim-majority countries who show little evidence of wanting serious social or ideological change of any kind. While Muslim themselves, they do not want the kind of fundamental, sweeping changes advocated by the Radicals, Reformers, or Revivalists. To the contrary, they resist change; generally speaking, their mission is to hold power for as long as possible.

Most modern Arab regimes fall into this category. The royal family and senior leaders of Saudi Arabia are classic Resisters. As Sunni Wahhabi Muslims, some may theologically identify with the Radicals, but they part paths politically. Some of their schools are certainly producing a new generation of extremists, and their oil wealth often funds groups of Radicals, but the House of Saud wants to remain in political power and wants to retain the enormous revenues that come from selling oil

to the West and the East. Thus Saudi leaders try to remain vigilant so as not to let Radicals take over their kingdom. They do not want a revolution on the Arabian peninsula. Nor do they want Osama bin Laden, himself a Saudi, and his al Qaeda movement to destroy the West and establish a global caliphate. Moreover, they are absolutely terrified by the notion that Iranian Shia Muslims will attempt to blow up the world to hasten the coming of the Mahdi—an eschatology they as Sunnis do not share. So they maintain close ties to the U.S. and the European Union and pursue geopolitical stability at almost all costs.

President Hosni Mubarak of Egypt—nominally a Muslim but more of a secular Arab nationalist at heart—is also a classic Resister. His predecessor, Anwar Sadat, was the region’s first bold Reformer: a Muslim who made peace with the Israelis, broke with the Soviets, and embraced the United States. But he was assassinated by Radicals for his efforts, and Mubarak never forgot that. Mubarak was Egypt’s vice president at the time and was sitting next to Sadat the day he was killed. Mubarak has never appointed another vice president and has resisted fundamental changes in Egypt of almost any kind ever since.

Other Resisters tend to be secular Arab nationalists as well, not interested in creating a Radical Islamic caliphate, though they certainly want to rule as dictators and seize as much wealth, power, and territory as they can. At times they align themselves with Radicals if they think they can gain material or territorial advantages in the process. But they are not “true believers.” Indeed, they are just as likely to round up and kill or imprison Radicals as join forces with them. It often depends on their mood and their sense of self-interest. Resisters also tend to imprison, torture, and sometimes execute Reformers and Revivalists because, in their view, change is dangerous. Stability is all-important. Syria’s Bashar al-Assad is a classic Resister. So is Libya’s Moammar Ghaddafi, along with the leaders of Algeria and Tunisia.

The Reticent include leaders of Muslim-majority countries or territories who have leanings toward one movement or another but have not fully committed. They do the two-step, dancing for a season with one partner, then shifting to another.

Palestinian chairman Mahmoud Abbas is, in many ways, a charter

member of the Reticent. Once the number-two man next to Yasser Arafat, he wrote his doctoral dissertation denying the Holocaust. He is a Sunni Muslim but has operated historically much more like a secular Arab nationalist and even like a Marxist. Since rising to power in the wake of Arafat's death, however, Abbas has shown some small but noteworthy signs of shifting away from Arafat's worldview and toward actually wanting to make peace with Israel through a two-state solution. But he is politically weak. He is surrounded by Radicals and Resisters. The jihadists of Hamas have seized control of Gaza—fully a third of his territorial “kingdom”—and threatened to assassinate him, his family, and everyone else he knows if he makes peace with Israel or embraces true democratic reforms in the West Bank. So he dances.

Pakistani president Pervez Musharraf was also a member of the Reticent, until he resigned his post in August 2008. Before 9/11, Musharraf's intelligence services helped build and strengthen the extremist Taliban government in Afghanistan. But after 9/11, to his credit, Musharraf made a significant course correction. Unfortunately, he made little effort or progress to clean up Pakistan's rampant corruption problems. But in other ways he did begin remaking himself as a Reformer, however imperfect. He became an important and useful ally in the war against the Radicals, directing his security forces to hunt down and arrest hundreds of terrorists and extremist leaders, including Khalid Sheikh Mohammed, the mastermind of the 9/11 attacks, and Dr. A. Q. Khan, the father of Pakistan's nuclear weapons program, who would later confess to selling blueprints, equipment, and technical advice to Iran, Libya, and North Korea to help them develop their nuclear weapons programs. He took steps to protect the Pakistani Christian community from jihadist attacks and even reached out to Israel, once shaking Prime Minister Ariel Sharon's hand at the United Nations and delivering a major address to a gathering of the American Jewish Congress in New York in 2005. It was no wonder, then, that al Qaeda and other Radical groups tried to assassinate him so many times.

The Rank-and-File, finally, comprise the vast majority of the world's 1.3 billion Muslims. They do not run countries. Individually, they generally have little or no wealth or power. But they are enormously

important. First, they are souls created in God's image. Second, they are suffering. As I will detail later in the book, many live in absolute, destitute poverty and see no future and no hope for their lives, their children's lives, or their grandchildren's lives. Third, they are searching. They want a better life. They know their nations and their regions are failing. But they are not sure which way to turn.

When it comes to the social, economic, and spiritual crises plaguing the Islamic world, the Rank-and-File wonder, *Who has the right diagnosis? Who has the right prognosis? Are the Radicals right in teaching that a purer form of Islam is the answer and that violent jihad is the way? Are the Reformers right in thinking that Islam is good but that more freedom, openness, and democracy are the way forward? Or are the Revivalists right, that Islam is not the answer, that Jesus is the answer, and that only by accepting Christ's death on the cross and resurrection from the dead can a person be forgiven and saved and filled with hope and joy here in this life and in the life to come?*

The Rank-and-File represent the vast middle ground of the Muslim world. They are going about their day-to-day lives without much of a desire to be Revolutionaries of any kind. But they are the audience to which the Radicals, the Reformers, and the Revivalists are speaking. If any of these three major movements ever gains the majority—or even a working plurality—of the Rank-and-File, the entire world will be forever changed, for good or ill.

Understanding these three Revolutionary movements—including the crises they are responding to and the answers they are offering—is of absolutely critical importance. Those who ignore these trends do so at their peril.

Joel C. Rosenberg

WASHINGTON, D.C.
NOVEMBER 11, 2008



the
RADICALS

PART ONE



CHAPTER ONE

WORST-CASE SCENARIO

My conversation with the former commander of Delta Force

I FIRST MET HIM at the Pentagon in February 2007.

At the time, William G. “Jerry” Boykin was a three-star lieutenant general in the United States Army, serving as deputy undersecretary of defense for intelligence. As such, he was responsible for overseeing the gathering and analysis of all military intelligence related to the global War on Terror. He had read my first nonfiction book, *Epicenter: Why the Current Rumbblings in the Middle East Will Change Your World*, and had invited my wife, Lynn, and me for lunch to discuss my research and conclusions.

After taking us and some mutual friends on a tour of the Pentagon and showing us the memorial chapel where Flight 77 hit on 9/11, General Boykin took us to a private dining room where we began to chat. We talked about his family and his years in the military. We talked about his thoughts on the ongoing battles in Iraq and Afghanistan and about the rising Iranian nuclear threat. He asked me about my assessment of Iranian president Mahmoud Ahmadinejad and why I believed the president’s Shia eschatology, or end times theology, was driving Iranian foreign policy. It was not a subject that was being discussed much inside the Pentagon’s higher echelons at the time, and he was curious. It was the beginning of a friendship that would soon deepen between our two families.

Few men I have ever met in Washington understand the mind-set and mission of the Radicals better than Boykin. He has, after all, been hunting Radicals for nearly thirty years, and his firsthand knowledge and insight were invaluable.

TWO PROPAGANDA WINDFALLS . . . AND A THIRD

When the Iranian Revolution erupted in 1979, Boykin was a thirty-one-year-old commando training with the U.S. Army's newly formed and highly classified counterterrorism team known as Delta Force. In November of that year, Radicals seized the American Embassy in Tehran and took dozens of American diplomats and Marines hostage. Boykin and his boss, Col. Charlie Beckwith, the legendary Delta commander, were ordered to the Pentagon. There they were briefed on the latest intelligence and began planning a rescue.

This was America's first direct confrontation with Radical Islamic jihadists. No one in Washington had ever encountered a crisis quite like this. In the months that followed, Boykin and his colleagues studied everything they could find on the Ayatollah Khomeini, the nature and loyalty of his followers, the students that had stormed the embassy compound, and the religious and political beliefs that drove them to wage jihad against the West. When President Carter finally ordered the rescue of the hostages, Boykin was one of the Delta team leaders penetrating Iranian airspace in the dark of night. The mission, as I will detail in a later chapter, was a disaster, not simply due to failures of equipment and human error, but because it emboldened the Radicals and gave them a sense of divine choosing and invincibility.

"I'll say two things, Joel," Boykin told me when we sat down for a formal interview in the winter of 2008, several months after he retired from the Army. "First of all, that failed rescue attempt was the greatest professional disappointment of my thirty-six-plus years in the military. In our view, we had not only failed the fifty-three Americans in the embassy, we'd failed the nation. And it was a tremendous burden that we all still carry today. But the second thing is that the hostage crisis was the beginning of our focus on the Islamic Revolution. That was when we really started paying attention to what was happening among the Radical jihadists."¹

"What was the impact of that failure?" I asked Boykin.

“If you stop and think about it, that was one of the two most significant propaganda windfalls in Radical Islam’s recent history,” he replied. “The fact of the matter is the jihadists were able to say with some credibility to the rest of the Islamic world, ‘We have just defeated the Great Satan. We held their hostages for 444 days, and they were inept. Allah has shown us favor. Allah is with us.’”

“What was the second?” I asked.

“The second was when the Russians left Afghanistan and went home defeated, and the Soviet Union disintegrated,” Boykin replied immediately. “Now, Osama bin Laden used that for propaganda purposes. He said, ‘We have defeated the world’s great infidel power. Now the effeminate Americans will be easy.’”

The combination of those two events, Boykin told me, became the greatest recruiting tool in the history of the Radicals and dramatically swelled their ranks in the years to come.

I noted that there was a third event that aided the growth of the Radicals: Hezbollah’s suicide truck bombing attack against the Marine barracks in Beirut, Lebanon, in 1983.

Boykin agreed. “That was a devastating day for America when they killed our Marines at the barracks,” he said, noting that before 1983, U.S. forces had never encountered a suicide bombing. “People who would blow themselves up? This was something we didn’t understand.”

The incident was horrifying for the entire Marine Corps and specifically for the families of the men who were directly involved. But compounding the disaster, the Reagan administration chose to cut and run, pulling all U.S. military forces out of Lebanon.

“The great tragedy of that whole thing geopolitically,” Boykin argued, “is that we immediately withdrew our forces. What did that say? What did it say to the Islamists? What did it say to the extremists? It made them think, ‘We won; you lost.’ And they were able to make that point with some credibility. After all, they blew up our Marines, we withdrew, and Beirut was back in their hands.”

“WE HAVE A BLACK HAWK DOWN”

Ten years later, Boykin again found himself at the vortex of a battle between the U.S. and Radical Islam, which became yet another

propaganda windfall for the Radicals. The time: August 1993. The location: Mogadishu, Somalia. The enemy: the jihadist militia run by Somalian warlord Mohammed Farrah Aidid, supported by al Qaeda jihadists, financed and trained by none other than Osama bin Laden.

“Almost 4.5 million people, more than half the total number in the country, were threatened with starvation, severe malnutrition, and related diseases,” reported a U.N. assessment team. “The magnitude of suffering was immense. Overall, an estimated 300,000 people, including many children, died. Some two million people, violently displaced from their home areas, fled either to neighboring countries or elsewhere within Somalia. All institutions of governance and at least 60 percent of the country’s basic infrastructure disintegrated.”²

At the order of President Bill Clinton, U.S. special forces were sent to capture General Aidid and stop the bloodletting. This time, Boykin was no longer just a member of the Army’s most elite fighting force. He was now the Delta Force commander, and he was horrified by what he found.

“We went into Mogadishu not fully realizing the difficulty of our task,” Boykin explained. “Given that this was a lawless society, this was anarchy in its purest form—it was nothing but sectarian violence, clan against clan. And they were all, in one form or another, extremists—Islamic extremists. They were doing things that were alien to us. They were using unarmed women as shields as they would approach our positions. When we would go into certain facilities, they would throw their children up in front of them as a shield. It is difficult for us as Americans to understand that kind of mentality.”

On October 3, U.S. forces received intelligence that a small group of Aidid’s closest associates were having a meeting in an area called the Bakara Market, euphemistically known as the “Black Sea.” It was known to be the most violent part of the Somalian capital, and one that Boykin and his men had not gone into previously. “In a situation like that, you don’t choose your locations; the people you’re after do,” Boykin told me. “The intelligence was credible. We knew they were there. We were expecting about half a dozen of them. So we went in.”

Major General Bill Garrison was responsible for the overall operations of Task Force Ranger, as well as for coordinating U.S. strategy

with the U.N. forces. Boykin had the specific tactical responsibilities for going after the targets in Mogadishu.

“We made our assault, captured roughly twenty-one people, and then loaded them on trucks and started back to our base to bring them in for interrogation,” Boykin recalled. “As we were trying to get out of the city, one of our helicopters was shot down, and it changed everything.”

With the crash of a Black Hawk helicopter in the middle of a Radical no-man’s-land, the Americans had suddenly lost the initiative. Now, rather than a quick strike and rapid extraction operation, U.S. forces had to literally fight their way house by house, street by street, block by block just to get to the crash site and try to recover the dead and wounded that were there. Thousands of heavily armed jihadists poured into the streets and began converging on the site. As the hours passed and night fell, the firefight intensified. Neither the Delta teams nor the Rangers were having success in extracting the bodies of the chopper’s two crew members.

The battle lasted eighteen hours. Eventually the Delta operators and Army Rangers were able to reassemble their team and fight their way out of the city. But they were completely unprepared for what they would see next.

“If you remember the news footage of our soldiers,” Boykin recalled, “their bodies were dragged through the streets and mutilated. And some of the stories have never even been told. It would be too painful for the families to tell the whole story, but the abuse and mutilation, particularly by the women in Mogadishu, was something that just is incomprehensible to us. What causes someone to be that way? Is it just a tribal thing? Is it just a cultural thing? Or is it part of their theology?”

“By military standards, it was a victory for us,” Boykin concluded. “We captured more than the six [of General Aidid’s top commanders] that we went after—we captured about twenty-one of them. We lost eighteen Americans dead and over seventy wounded. It seems like a high casualty count. But then compare it to the casualties on the other side. Conservative estimates by the Red Cross are that we killed and wounded 1,100 people in an eighteen-hour battle. Now, by any standards, that’s a victory. However, that was when we realized you can win the battle and lose the war.”

“How so?” I asked.

“First, because the American media called it a disaster—a huge military failure,” Boykin explained. “Second, the Clinton administration pulled all of Task Force Ranger out of Mogadishu before we had completed our mission, before we had captured Mohammed Aidid.”

“What was the effect of the White House decision to withdraw prematurely?” I asked.

“The extremists there were encouraged, particularly Osama bin Laden,” Boykin replied without hesitation. “Now, I am one who does not believe Osama bin Laden was there, involved in that battle. I’ve seen no evidence of that. But he was certainly associated with it. He was certainly tied to it in terms of probably providing material and financial support to those people, but certainly ideological support, moral support. And then we gave him an opportunity, as a result of our withdrawal, to once again proclaim that Allah had shown them favor and that more good Muslims should come to the Islamic extremist cause. And they did.”

HOW SERIOUS A THREAT?

I asked General Boykin to take these four examples—the U.S. failure to rescue our hostages in Iran, the U.S. withdrawal from Lebanon after the Marine barracks attack, the Soviets pulling out of Afghanistan, and the U.S. pulling out of Somalia—and put them into a broader context. What were the implications of these events? What was the Big Picture?

“Well, first of all, there are 1.3 billion Muslims around the world,” Boykin told me. “And I’ll just tell you right now, Joel, I don’t think that every Muslim is a threat to America or to the West. I think there are many who really would like to see this extremism go away because it in fact is causing more problems for them than it is helping their cause. But if only one percent of the 1.3 billion are extremists and jihadists, do the math. That’s frightening. I mean particularly when they are willing to die for their cause, when they believe that martyrdom is the surest way to heaven—that’s frightening. If that one percent all turned into suicide bombers, just think what a threat that would be.

“As we look at every time that we have been up against these extremists,

we've either been unsuccessful in our objectives or, more importantly, we've not been willing to stay the course and see it through and to fight to win, which is exactly what happened in Mogadishu. It's exactly what happened after the Beirut bombing in 1983. And it's exactly what many advocate in terms of our operations in Iraq and even Afghanistan today. All that has done is emboldened the extremists. All that has done is given them fodder for their propaganda. It has given them credibility as they use the Internet, use the broadcast media, use every outlet to broadcast their propaganda, to say that Allah has shown them favor, to say, 'You need to now align yourself with our cause.' It has allowed them credibility to bring more young Radicals into the cause.

"That's one of the reasons that I think that staying the course—and I don't mean tactically, I don't mean necessarily using exactly the same methodologies that we're using today, but staying the course strategically—in Iraq is very critical. Why? Because if we give the Radicals this opportunity for more propaganda by pulling out and not fighting this radicalism, all we're going to do is increase their recruiting, increase their opportunities for finding more young Radicals."

I asked, "With all your years of experience in the Pentagon, commanding Delta Force, hunting jihadists around the globe, in your judgment, how serious to U.S. national security is the threat of Radical Islam in the twenty-first century?"

"When I came into the Army in 1971, we were focused on the Soviet Union," Boykin replied. "Even though we were fighting in Vietnam, our real threat was the Soviet Union. But I would say to you, Joel, that the threat that Radical Islam presents to not only America but to the world today is an even more serious threat than when we were in a nuclear standoff during the Cold War. And it's more concerning to me because this is an enemy that is hard to understand. It is an enemy that is easy to ignore, and it is an enemy that is absolutely relentless."

"What's the mind-set of the jihadist movement? What do they want? What's driving them?"

"Well, first of all, I think their mind-set is very clearly based on their own manifesto that they are adhering to—a very radical, extreme interpretation of the Qur'an. They clearly believe that infidels—infidels defined as those that do not serve Allah—must either be converted or killed."

THE “TOP FIVE” LIST

“What, then, is the worst-case scenario?” I asked.

“I think the worst-case scenario is that the jihadists continue in their pursuit of weapons of mass destruction,” Boykin said without hesitation. “Weapons of mass destruction are available to them now, particularly chemical and biological, and those are not hard to make. But the worst-case scenario is, I think, that they have nuclear capabilities within these terrorist organizations, within the jihadist movement; that they intimidate Europe to the point that Europe is no longer capable of standing against them as they have done historically; and that they take their extremism to the entire world, and people start to buckle under the intimidation and pressure of what I would see as a huge Islamic movement.”

How exactly would the Radicals hit us?

Boykin gave me his “top five” list of scenarios that deeply trouble him and his colleagues in the military and intelligence community.

Worst-Case Scenario No. 1: Once Iran acquires operational nuclear weapons, they could attach these warheads to short-to-medium-range ballistic missiles, hide such missiles in commercial containers (used to transport cars, farm equipment, toys from China, and so forth), and then launch those missiles off the backs of container ships approaching major American port cities. As portrayed in my novel *Dead Heat*, this would give the enemies of the United States the decisive element of surprise. A missile fired at Manhattan, Los Angeles, Seattle, or Washington, D.C., would take less than five minutes to impact, giving civilians no effective warning and no time to evacuate, and giving U.S. military forces precious little opportunity to intercept those missiles—even if we had a missile-defense system guarding the homeland, which we currently do not.

Iranian forces would not have to carry out such attacks themselves, of course. They could provide nuclear weapons and missiles to terrorist groups such as al Qaeda, Hezbollah, or some other Radical group as proxies to carry out their apocalyptic agenda.

Worst-Case Scenario No. 2: Iran or other Radical states or groups could load nuclear weapons onto private planes taking off from

Canada, Mexico, or another foreign country, bound for the United States. Once inside our airspace, they could then fly kamikaze missions into American cities or simply detonate the nuclear weapon inside the plane itself—over their intended target—without initiating a dive-bombing sequence or making any other obviously hostile moves that might alert air-traffic controllers to the threat. Passengers and cargo on private planes receive few if any security clearances before entering U.S. airspace. No ID checks. No metal detectors. No luggage screening. All this creates enormous holes in our homeland security defense systems, which Radicals may soon take advantage of.

Worst-Case Scenario No. 3: Radicals could load nuclear weapons onto private yachts or other boats entering the harbors of major American cities and detonate these weapons close to population centers, airports, and naval bases.

Worst-Case Scenario No. 4: Radicals could smuggle nuclear weapons or other weapons of mass destruction into the U.S. through Canada or Mexico to be detonated deep in the interior of the country. People, drugs, and weapons are smuggled into the U.S. all the time. U.S. homeland security has improved significantly since 9/11, but in many ways, our borders are still Swiss cheese, making us extremely vulnerable to catastrophic attacks of this nature.

Worst-Case Scenario No. 5: Even without access to fully developed, state-of-the-art nuclear bombs and nuclear warheads, Radicals could still hit us hard. They could, for example, build and detonate “dirty bombs”—bombs made with conventional explosives such as dynamite, mixed with waste from nuclear power plants or other radiological substances—inside the United States. Experts say such devices would not cause the same magnitude of catastrophic death or destruction as a true nuclear weapon, but they would still be psychologically and economically devastating.³ We are also vulnerable, Boykin noted, to chemical and biological weapons in subways and water systems.

“The fifth scenario is my greatest concern,” Boykin would later elaborate in an e-mail to me, although he added that the combination

of elements from several of these scenarios is very worrisome. “All the others are real possibilities, but they require a fair amount of logistics and consequently a fair number of people who know what is happening. That means there is a greater chance of one of the intel services finding out and preventing it. But dirty bomb (or chemical or biological) materials could come in across the Mexican border fairly easily, I am sad to say.

“The other way is for the terrorists to recruit a local in the North Carolina or South Carolina coastal region to bring things in aboard his sport fishing vessel, to which no attention is paid, and put it in his pickup and drive it to D.C. A dirty bomb would shut down our government even though it would not kill millions of people. In the confusion inside D.C., other conventional bombs could be used to destroy much of the U.S. government infrastructure. I am concerned about the growing number of Americans who have been recruited to Islam. They are usually angry young men with a sense of hopelessness. Even if they are not suicidal, they may very well be genocidal as well as eager to seek revenge for what they see as injustice. These people could make several scenarios more feasible. Think of the devastating psychological effects of a dirty bomb disrupting our government. The recruiting of the Radicals would go off the scale and embolden every radical Muslim in America to support the ‘soon return of the Mahdi and the soon rise of the caliphate.’”⁴

Longer term, Boykin also worries about a sixth scenario. Once Iran or another Radical state is able to build long-range, intercontinental ballistic missiles and attach nuclear warheads to them, such states could fire these missiles at the U.S. and our allies. We are working hard on building missile-defense systems capable of stopping such attacks, but these systems are not yet fully operational and continue to arouse enormous resistance from some members of Congress, from some of our allies, and most notably from the Russians.

THE IRANIAN BOMB

How close is Iran to having nuclear weapons?

Boykin told me that based on everything he had seen and heard during his tenure at the Pentagon, he believes that “within two years,

maybe three,” the Iranians will “develop a nuclear weapon, a deliverable nuclear weapon.”

Translation: 2010 or 2011.

“We know that Ahmadinejad has centrifuges spinning. We know that he has the technology. He has the scientists, and he certainly has the determination. Ahmadinejad is a very, very dangerous man in my view. I believe that the world should pay close attention to what he has said. Some would say, ‘Well, that’s just rhetoric.’ But let’s go back and look at Hitler’s rhetoric in 1933 and what ultimately occurred.”

“Given all that you know about the Ayatollah Khomeini from the 1970s and Mahmoud Ahmadinejad today,” I asked, “which one is more dangerous?”

For Boykin, it was not a close call. “I think Ahmadinejad is far more dangerous than the Ayatollah Khomeini was because he has more resources,” he told me. “Certainly he has more money as a result of the oil in Iran. He has greater weapons capabilities. He has a more sophisticated army and military in general. And regardless of what the 2007 National Intelligence Estimate says, he is developing nuclear capabilities.”

“In your view,” I asked, “can the West successfully deter or negotiate with Ahmadinejad and his regime in the kind of classic balance-of-power approach that worked with the Soviets?”

“My view is that negotiating with Ahmadinejad is a waste of time,” Boykin replied. “I don’t think there’s anything that you can appeal to in Ahmadinejad’s view of geopolitics, of life in general, that would result in any kind of meaningful agreement with the West. I think Ahmadinejad sees himself as a man who is supposed to hasten the arrival of the Mahdi. He has even indicated that in his speeches. Ahmadinejad believes that the Mahdi will come as a result of his efforts, part of which includes destroying or at least subjugating Israel. And so I think the threat goes beyond just nuclear weapons. I think the threat really is a threat of growing Radicalism within Iran, which is influencing much of the thinking in the rest of the Islamic world. And ultimately, when a man is that driven—when a man is that convinced that Allah is holding him accountable to do that [destroy Judeo-Christian civilization]—I think to believe that we could negotiate with him in any meaningful way is just inane.”

A GRAND FINALE

Is General Boykin correct?

Are Radical Islamic jihadists in general—and the Ahmadinejad regime in Iran in particular—actively seeking weapons of mass destruction and specifically nuclear weapons to destroy Western civilization and usher in the end of days?

Kamal Saleem certainly thinks so. “Ahmadinejad is in a race to create nuclear weapons,” this former Lebanese terrorist—once a member of the Muslim Brotherhood—told me. “Ahmadinejad is a true Muslim zealot. You know in the Muslim world he is a hero. Why? Because he’s fulfilling his duty to usher in the Mahdi. The Mahdi is the Muslim Messiah who would usher in a Muslim one-world order, which is ruled by one Muslim man. And that’s his heart’s desire. If you ask anybody on the street in the Middle East, they know this. But when you ask somebody in the United States of America about this, they have no clue. They don’t know what Ahmadinejad is all about. It’s world domination, to take over the world—one world order—that’s it.”⁵

Walid Shoebat agrees. “They want a grand finale,” this former Palestinian terrorist told the producer of our *Epicenter* documentary film. “They don’t want to simply put a bomb in a bus or in a mall. They want a grand finale; they want one operation that kind of cripples America once and for all—be it dirty bomb, or be it a real nuke.”⁶

Porter Goss, director of the Central Intelligence Agency from 2004 through 2006, thinks so as well. “There’s no question in my mind that Ahmadinejad and people in the military in Iran are seeking the Persian Bomb for military purposes,” he told me as I researched this book. “If that is allowed to happen, we’re talking about a nuclear weapon in the hands of a Radical. That would be a huge, huge watershed in the geopolitical world.”⁷

“Will the CIA know when Iran has the Bomb *before* they use it?” I asked.

Goss was not so sure. Back in 1998, he noted, India and Pakistan stunned the world by testing nuclear weapons within days of each other when not a single Western intelligence agency—including the CIA—had any idea either country was so close to having the Bomb. Calling it “the biggest intelligence failure” in the CIA’s history to that point, Goss

warned that “the intelligence community had failed to give sufficient priority to the development of nuclear weapons by sovereign states. I think we had been lulled into the fraternity of the nuclear club and [into thinking] that the folks in the International Atomic Energy Agency had things under control and were doing their job effectively. It turned out not to be true.”

“Could such a catastrophic intelligence failure happen again?” I asked. “Is it possible that the CIA and other U.S. and Western leaders might fundamentally misunderstand Iranian intentions and misread Iran’s technological capabilities and suddenly be confronted with a nuclear-armed Islamic regime well ahead of their current assessments?”

“Yes,” Goss conceded, “there could be another surprise.”

Alireza Jafarzadeh, a leading Iranian dissident who strongly opposes the Ahmadinejad regime, also believes Tehran is feverishly pursuing nuclear weapons. “This is the nightmare scenario,” he told me when I interviewed him in 2008, “that the most Radical Islamic extremist regime—which is already the world’s leading state sponsor of terrorism; which is now fully entrenched in the most violent way in Iraq, killing thousands of innocent people; which has called for wiping Israel off the map and an end to the United States; and which has this global Islamic rule agenda and believes in the end of the world—would now get the nuclear bomb.”⁸

Jafarzadeh certainly knows what he’s talking about. An outspoken advocate of a “non-nuclear, secular, democratic state” in the country of his birth, it was Jafarzadeh who on August 14, 2002, held a press conference in Washington to reveal the existence of two top secret Iranian nuclear weapons research facilities. Up to that point, both facilities—a uranium enrichment plant in Natanz, about 100 miles north of Isfahan, and a heavy-water uranium production plant in Arak, about 150 miles south of Tehran—were completely unknown to U.S. or Western intelligence agencies. But the existence and significance of both have now been confirmed by the CIA and the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), intensifying Western fears that Iran is hiding advanced nuclear weapons research facilities and could be closer to the Bomb than previously believed. During his 2002 news conference, Jafarzadeh

also revealed that in a closed session of the Iranian regime's Supreme National Security Council earlier that year, it had been agreed that "access to [a] nuclear bomb is the most important guarantor of our survival and in case of having the bomb, the Western countries will not be able to block penetration and expansion of the Islamic Revolution."⁹

Senator John McCain is also deeply concerned about Iran's nuclear ambitions and the implications of the mullahs getting the Bomb. "There's only one thing worse than using the option of military action [to stop Iran], and that is the Iranians acquiring nuclear weapons," the Arizona Republican said on NBC's *Meet the Press* while gearing up to run for president. If Iran gets the Bomb, he said, "I think we could have Armageddon."¹⁰

THE CLOCK IS TICKING

The bottom line: time is running out.

Western diplomatic efforts to persuade Tehran to abandon its feverish bid for nuclear weapons have not succeeded as of this writing. Nor have economic sanctions. By the fall of 2008, Iran claimed to have upwards of 6,000 operational centrifuges, sophisticated machines that can turn low-grade uranium into highly enriched, weapons-grade, bomb-making material.

Senior Israeli intelligence officials tell me they now fear Iran could have operational nuclear weapons by the end of 2009 or sometime in 2010. Senior U.S. intelligence and military officials tell me they think we have a bit more time. Some believe Iran will not have the Bomb until perhaps 2011. Others believe it could be as late as 2015.

Hopefully, those who say Iran is still quite a few years off from having nuclear weapons are right. But all the military and intelligence officials I interviewed for this book readily acknowledge that no one knows for certain how close Iran is to getting the "Islamic Bomb" and either holding hostage every power in the Middle East or actually carrying out their apocalyptic agenda.

In the end, it may not matter if U.S. and European intelligence analysts believe the world has more time before Iran gets the Bomb. It may not even matter if they are correct in their analysis. Why not? Because if the U.S. and NATO refuse to take military action to neutralize the

Iranian nuclear threat, and if Israel thinks that time has run out, leaders in Jerusalem may feel as if they are in the same situation their fathers were in 1967.

Then, Israel's enemies threatened to "throw the Jews into the sea" while they amassed state-of-the-art military forces on the borders of the Jewish state. Israeli officials faced an existential threat, and they concluded that they had no choice but to launch a preemptive strike in the hopes of neutralizing, if not eliminating, that threat. If they waited to be attacked, they feared they could be hit so hard, so fast, with so much firepower that they could never recover. So strike they did. Miraculously, the war lasted only six days.

Today, Israel faces an even more dangerous scenario than that of 1967. If Iran's Ayatollah Khamenei and President Ahmadinejad are able to acquire nuclear warheads and attach them to the high-speed ballistic missiles already in their possession, they would be in a position to accomplish in about six minutes what it took Adolf Hitler nearly six years to do: kill six million Jews.

Israeli leaders may, therefore, choose a strategy similar to the one their predecessors chose in 1967. In this case, they may launch a massive air and missile strike against Iranian nuclear facilities, air bases, missile launchers, air defense systems, and possibly government offices and critical infrastructure facilities before Iran has the opportunity to strike Israel first.

Such a move may prove necessary in the end, but it could also set the whole region on fire. Israel could face hundreds of incoming retaliatory missiles from Iran as well as tens of thousands of incoming ballistic missiles and rockets from Syria, from Hezbollah in Lebanon, from Hamas in Gaza, and possibly from the West Bank, as well. Some of these missiles could be carrying chemical or biological warheads, even if the nuclear warheads in Iran were not in the picture. Ballistic missiles could also be fired from Iran at the oil fields in Saudi Arabia and the Gulf States, at oil tankers in the Persian Gulf and the Strait of Hormuz, and at U.S. bases and forces in Iraq. Thousands of suicide bomber cells could be activated in the region, particularly against Iraq and Israel. At the same time, sleeper terrorist cells could be activated in Western Europe, Canada, and the United States.

Meanwhile, terrorist efforts to topple pro-Western Middle Eastern leaders, such as Jordan's King Abdullah II and Egypt's President Hosni Mubarak, in favor of Radical Islamic regimes friendly to Tehran could also be set in motion. Amid such global carnage and chaos, oil prices could soar to \$300 a barrel or more. U.S. gas prices could spike to \$10 a gallon or more, with horrific domestic and international economic repercussions. Worst of all, tens of millions of innocent civilians could be caught in the cross fire of a war they don't want but cannot prevent.

THE VIEW FROM JERUSALEM

General Moshe Ya'alon, former chief of staff of the Israeli Defense Forces, sees a major war with Iran coming soon because the West has been so feckless and unconvincing in confronting the regime in Tehran. When I met with him in his office in Jerusalem, he was clear and direct. "The confrontation with the Iranian regime is inevitable, and it is going to be a military one rather than a political one because of the lack of determination when it comes to the international community to deal with it [the Iranian threat] by political or economic means. And we can't avoid it, unless we are going to give up our way of life, our values, our culture."¹¹

"How much time does the West have to make a decision about how to stop Iran?" I asked.

"When it comes to the Iranian military nuclear project," he said, "it is in terms of a couple of years—might be a couple of months."

That was March of 2007.

"Can the West successfully stop Iran?" I pressed.

It can, he insisted, if it gets serious—quickly. "In military terms, the Iranians are not so strong." The problem, he said, is that "the West has a lack of determination. There are few leaders today who really understand that we are engaged in World War III."

Like Generals Boykin and Ya'alon, former Israeli prime minister Benjamin Netanyahu is also worried about the rising Iranian nuclear threat and the West's inability or unwillingness thus far to confront the crisis effectively. And he, too, believes the day of reckoning is fast approaching.

“I think the West misunderstood, and still misunderstands, the threat of Radical Islam,” he told me in his Tel Aviv office in March of 2007. “It is a fanatic, messianic ideology that seeks to have an apocalyptic battle for world supremacy with the West. It seeks to correct what its disciples see as an accident of history, where the West has risen and Islam has declined. The correction is supposed to be accomplished by the resurrection of an Islamic empire and the acquisition and use of nuclear weapons, if necessary, to obliterate Islam’s enemies, and to subjugate the rest. This is a pathological ideology, much like Nazism was. And it poses a threat, in my judgment, in many ways bigger than Nazism because Hitler embarked on a world conflict and then sought to achieve nuclear weapons, whereas the leading radical Islamic regime, Iran, is seeking to first acquire nuclear weapons and then embark on a world conflict. And that is what is not yet understood in the West, and certainly, if it’s understood, it’s not acted upon.

“Once Iran has nuclear weapons,” Netanyahu continued, “they could threaten the West in ways that are unimaginable today. They could take over the Persian Gulf on all its sides and take control of the oil reserves of the world, most of them. They could topple Saudi Arabia and Jordan in short order. And, of course, Iraq. All your internal debates in America on Iraq would be irrelevant, because nuclear-armed Iran would subordinate Iraq in two seconds. And, of course, they threaten to create a second Holocaust in Israel and proceed on their idea of building a global empire, producing twenty-five atomic bombs a year—250 bombs in a decade—with missiles that they are already working on, to reach the eastern seaboard of the United States. Everything else pales in comparison to this development. This has to be stopped.”

How much time, I asked him, does the West have to act decisively to stop Iran?

“Not much,” he replied. “We are running out of time. I can’t tell you if it’s a period of months or a few years. Certainly no more than a few years.”¹²

appendix

20 TERROR PLOTS AGAINST AMERICA FOILED SINCE 9/11

WHY HAS THE UNITED STATES not been hit by terrorists inside our country since September 11, 2001? It is not because the Radicals are not trying. Al Qaeda and other extremist individuals and organizations have tried repeatedly to launch murderous attacks against innocent American civilians and military personnel. But they have failed by God's grace and the hard work of U.S. and foreign law enforcement, intelligence, and military officials. The following is a list of twenty known terror plots thwarted by the U.S. government since the attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon in 2001:¹

1. **December 2001**—Richard Reid: British citizen attempted to ignite shoe bomb on flight from Paris to Miami.
2. **May 2002**—Jose Padilla: American citizen accused of seeking radioactive-laced “dirty bomb” to use in an attack against America. Padilla was convicted of conspiracy in August 2007.
3. **September 2002**—Lackawanna Six: American citizens of Yemeni origin convicted of supporting al Qaeda after attending jihadist camp in Pakistan. Five of six were from Lackawanna, New York.

4. **May 2003**—Iyman Faris: American citizen charged with plotting to use blowtorches to collapse the Brooklyn Bridge.
5. **June 2003**—Virginia Jihad Network: Eleven men from Alexandria, Virginia, trained for jihad against American soldiers, convicted of violating the Neutrality Act.
6. **August 2004**—Dhiren Barot: Indian-born leader of terror cell plotted bombings on financial centers.
7. **August 2004**—James Elshafay and Shahawar Matin Siraj: Sought to plant bomb at New York's Penn Station during the Republican National Convention.
8. **August 2004**—Yassin Aref and Mohammed Hossain: Plotted to assassinate a Pakistani diplomat on American soil.
9. **June 2005**—Father and son Umer Hayat and Hamid Hayat: Son convicted of attending terrorist training camp in Pakistan; father convicted of customs violation.
10. **August 2005**—Kevin James, Levar Haley Washington, Gregory Vernon Patterson, and Hammad Riaz Samana: Los Angeles homegrown terrorists who plotted to attack National Guard, LAX, two synagogues, and the Israeli consulate.
11. **December 2005**—Michael Reynolds: Plotted to blow up natural gas refinery in Wyoming, the Transcontinental Pipeline, and a refinery in New Jersey. Reynolds was sentenced to thirty years in prison.
12. **February 2006**—Mohammad Zaki Amawi, Marwan Othman El-Hindi, and Zand Wassim Mazloum: Accused of providing material support to terrorists making bombs for use in Iraq.
13. **April 2006**—Syed Haris Ahmed and Ehsanul Islam Sadequee: Cased and videotaped the Capitol and World Bank for a terrorist organization.

14. June 2006—Narseal Batiste, Patrick Abraham, Stanley Grant Phanon, Naudimar Herrera, Burson Augustin, Lyglenson Lemorin, and Rotschild Augustine: Accused of plotting to blow up the Sears Tower.

15. July 2006—Assem Hammoud: Accused of plotting to bomb New York City train tunnels.

16. August 2006—Liquid Explosives Plot: Thwarted plot to explode ten airliners over the United States.

17. March 2007—Khalid Sheikh Mohammed: Mastermind of 9/11 and author of numerous plots confessed in court to planning to destroy skyscrapers in New York, Los Angeles, and Chicago. Also plotted to assassinate Pope John Paul II and former president Bill Clinton.

18. May 2007—Fort Dix Plot: Six men accused of plotting to attack Fort Dix Army base in New Jersey. The plan included attacking and killing soldiers using assault rifles and grenades.

19. June 2007—JFK Plot: Four men accused of plotting to blow up fuel arteries that run through residential neighborhoods at JFK Airport in New York.

20. September 2007—German authorities disrupt terrorist cell planning attacks on military installations and facilities used by Americans in Germany. The Germans arrested three suspected members of the Islamic Jihad Union, a group that has links to al Qaeda and supports al Qaeda's global jihadist agenda.

endnotes

INTRODUCTION: NOT “IF” BUT “WHEN”

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CHAPTER 1: WORST-CASE SCENARIO

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9. Alireza Jafarzadeh, see remarks at the National Press Club, August 14, 2002, <http://www.iranwatch.org/privateviews/NCRI/perspex-ncri-topsecretprojects-081402.htm>, accessed August 21, 2008.
10. See transcript, NBC’s *Meet the Press*, April 2, 2006.
11. General Moshe Ya’alon, author interview, March 9, 2007.
12. Former prime minister Benjamin Netanyahu, author interview, March 2007.

CHAPTER 2: “ISLAM IS THE ANSWER; JIHAD IS THE WAY”

1. Sen. Barack Obama was speaking at a town hall in Oregon on May 18, 2008. See “Obama Flip-Flop on Iran,” *The Weekly Standard*, “The Blog,” May 19, 2008; see also “McCain Criticizes Obama Over Iran Comments,” Associated Press, May 19, 2008.
2. Ibid.

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Looking back, it now seems clear this book was set into motion in 1986, when the Lord first began to stir in my heart a curiosity about the Muslim world and gave me the opportunity to travel for a month to several Islamic cities in what was known then as Soviet Central Asia.

The following year, He gave me the wonderful privilege of traveling for the first time to Israel and the West Bank. While studying at Tel Aviv University for a semester, I witnessed firsthand the beginning of the Palestinian Muslim uprising known as the first intifada and its effect on Israel, on the U.S., and on world opinion.

By the next year, back at Syracuse University—my alma mater—Lynn and I began dating and volunteering in an international student ministry on campus run by our dear friend and pastor, Dr. T. E. Koshy. It was there that we developed so many special friendships with students from Iran, Gaza, and Algeria; and it was there that we began to learn how to love Muslims in real and practical ways.

What a journey it has been since. Lynn and I have been blessed by so many men and women who went out of their way to teach us, encourage us, challenge and inspire us. Though we wish we could, it would be impossible to acknowledge and thank them all by name. Still, we are compelled to honor a handful who deserve special recognition and appreciation.

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about the author

JOEL C. ROSENBERG is the founder of the Joshua Fund and the *New York Times* best-selling author of *The Last Jihad*, *The Last Days*, *The Ezekiel Option*, *The Copper Scroll*, *Dead Heat*, and *Epicenter*, with more than 1.5 million copies in print. As a communications strategist, he has worked with some of the world's most influential leaders in business, politics, and media, including Steve Forbes, Rush Limbaugh, and former Israeli prime minister Benjamin Netanyahu. As a novelist, he has been interviewed on hundreds of radio and TV programs, including ABC's *Nightline*, *CNN Headline News*, FOX News Channel, The History Channel, MSNBC, *The Rush Limbaugh Show*, and *The Sean Hannity Show*. He has been profiled by the *New York Times*, the *Washington Times*, *World* magazine, and the *Jerusalem Post*. He has addressed audiences all over the world, including Russia, Israel, Iraq, Jordan, Egypt, Turkey, and Belgium, and has spoken at the White House, the Pentagon, and the U.S. Capitol.

The first page of his first novel—*The Last Jihad*—puts readers inside the cockpit of a hijacked jet, coming in on a kamikaze attack into an American city, which leads to a war with Saddam Hussein over weapons of mass destruction. Yet it was written before 9/11 and published before the actual war with Iraq. *The Last Jihad* spent eleven weeks on the *New*

York Times hardcover fiction best-seller list, reaching as high as #7. It raced up the *USA Today* and *Publishers Weekly* best-seller lists, hit #4 on the *Wall Street Journal* list, and hit #1 on Amazon.com.

His second thriller—*The Last Days*—opens with the death of Yasser Arafat and a U.S. diplomatic convoy ambushed in Gaza. Two weeks before *The Last Days* was published in hardcover, a U.S. diplomatic convoy was ambushed in Gaza. Thirteen months later, Yasser Arafat was dead. *The Last Days* spent four weeks on the *New York Times* hardcover fiction best-seller list, hit #5 on the *Denver Post* list, and hit #8 on the *Dallas Morning News* list. Both books have been optioned by a Hollywood producer.

The Ezekiel Option centers on a dictator rising in Russia who forms a military alliance with the leaders of Iran as they feverishly pursue nuclear weapons and threaten to wipe Israel off the face of the earth. On the very day it was published in June 2005, Iran elected a new leader who vowed to accelerate the country's nuclear program and later threatened to "wipe Israel off the map." Six months after it was published, Moscow signed a \$1 billion arms deal with Tehran. *The Ezekiel Option* spent four weeks on the *New York Times* hardcover fiction best-seller list and five months on the Christian Bookseller Association (CBA) best-seller list, reaching as high as #4. It won the 2006 Christian Book Award for fiction.

In *The Copper Scroll*, an ancient scroll describes unimaginable treasures worth untold billions buried in the hills east of Jerusalem and under the Holy City itself—treasures that could come from the Second Temple and whose discovery could lead to the building of the Third Temple and a war of biblical proportions. One month after it was released, *Biblical Archaeology Review* published a story describing the real-life, intensified hunt for the treasures of the actual Copper Scroll. *The Copper Scroll* spent four weeks on the *New York Times* hardcover fiction best-seller list, two weeks on the *Wall Street Journal* best-seller list, two weeks on the *Publishers Weekly* hardcover fiction list, and several months on the CBA best-seller list. It won the 2007 Logos Bookstores Best Fiction Award.

In *Dead Heat*, America is in the midst of a heated presidential election when the Secret Service learns of a catastrophic terrorist plot to

assassinate one of the candidates. U.S. forces attempt to stop the terrorists before millions lose their lives, but events threaten to spin out of control. *Dead Heat* debuted at #4 on the *New York Times* hardcover best-seller list. It also became a *USA Today*, *Wall Street Journal*, *Publishers Weekly*, and CBA hardcover best seller.

Epicenter, Joel's best-selling nonfiction title, gives readers the headlines before they happen. It explains what is happening in the Middle East and how it will impact our world. It contains exclusive interviews with top political, military, intelligence, business, and religious leaders in Israel, Iran, Iraq, and Russia. It also contains previously classified documents from the CIA, Pentagon, and White House. *Epicenter* is available in hardcover and a 2.0 updated and expanded softcover edition. *Epicenter* has appeared on the *New York Times* political list, as well as the CBA and *Publishers Weekly* Religion lists. It also appeared on the Top 100 list in *Christian Retailing*.

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recommended reading

ISLAM

- Bernard Lewis. *What Went Wrong? The Clash Between Islam and Modernity in the Middle East*
- Bernard Lewis. *The Crisis of Islam: Holy War and Unholy Terror*
- John L. Esposito and Dalia Mogahed. *Who Speaks for Islam?: What a Billion Muslims Really Think*
- Sayyid Qutb. *Milestones*
- Vali Nasr. *The Shia Revival: How Conflicts within Islam Will Shape the Future*
- V. S. Naipaul. *Among the Believers: An Islamic Journey*
- Melanie Phillips. *Londonistan*
- Ambassador Marwan Muasher. *The Arab Center: The Promise of Moderation*
- Queen Noor of Jordan. *Leap of Faith: Memoirs of an Unexpected Life*
- Benazir Bhutto. *Reconciliation: Islam, Democracy, and the West*
- Ayaan Hirsi Ali. *Infidel*
- Jim Murk. *Islam Rising*

Brigitte Gabriel. *Because They Hate: A Survivor of Islamic Terror Warns America*

Nonie Darwish. *Now They Call Me Infidel: Why I Renounced Jihad for America, Israel, and the War on Terror*

Karen Armstrong. *Muhammad: A Biography of the Prophet*

Robert Spencer. *The Truth about Muhammad: Founder of the World's Most Intolerant Religion*

Maulana Muhammad Ali. "Founder of the Ahmadiyya Movement": A Short Story

TERRORISM AND AL QAEDA

Yaroslav Trofimov. *The Siege of Mecca: The Forgotten Uprising in Islam's Holiest Shrine and the Birth of al-Qaeda*

Lawrence Wright. *The Looming Tower: Al-Qaeda and the Road to 9/11*

Peter Bergen. *The Osama bin Laden I Know: An Oral History of al Qaeda's Leader*

Yossef Bodansky. *Bin Laden: The Man Who Declared War on America*

Randall B. Hamud. *Osama Bin Laden: America's Enemy in His Own Words*

Richard A. Clarke. *Against All Enemies: Inside America's War on Terror*

Richard Miniter. *Losing Bin Laden*

Laura Mansfield, editor. *His Own Words: A Translation of the Writings of Dr. Ayman al Zawahiri*

National Commission on Terrorist Attacks. *The 9/11 Commission Report: Final Report of the National Commission on Terrorist Attacks upon the United States*

Dore Gold. *Hatred's Kingdom: How Saudi Arabia Supports the New Global Terrorism*

Michael A. Sheehan. *Crush the Cell: How to Defeat Terrorism Without Terrorizing Ourselves*

Nicholas Noe, editor. *Voice of Hezbollah: The Statements of Sayyed Hassan Nasrallah*

Naim Qassem. *Hizbullah: The Story from Within*

UNITED STATES POLITICS

President Dwight Eisenhower. *Mandate for Change: The White House Years, 1953-1956*

President Jimmy Carter. *Keeping Faith: Memoirs of a President*

Admiral Stansfield Turner. *Burn Before Reading: Presidents, CIA Directors, and Secret Intelligence*

Zbigniew Brzezinski. *Power and Principle: Memoirs of the National Security Adviser, 1977-1981*

Henry Kissinger. *The White House Years*

Robert Gates. *From the Shadows: The Ultimate Insider's Story of Five Presidents and How They Won the Cold War*

Tim Weiner. *Legacy of Ashes: The History of the CIA*

Christopher Andrew. *For the President's Eyes Only: Secret Intelligence and the American Presidency from Washington to Bush*

George Tenet. *At the Center of the Storm: My Years at the CIA*

Bob Woodward. *State of Denial: Bush at War, Part III*

Bob Woodward. *The War Within: A Secret White House History 2006–2008*

ISLAM AND THE UNITED STATES

Mark Bowden. *Guests of the Ayatollah: The First Battle in America's War with Militant Islam*

His Majesty King Abdullah II. Address to the National Prayer Luncheon, February 2, 2006

Daniel Pipes. *Militant Islam Reaches America*

Stephen Kinzer. *All the Shah's Men: An American Coup and the Roots of Middle East Terror*

INTERNATIONAL POLITICS

Jerrold Post. *Leaders and Their Followers in a Dangerous World: The Psychology of Political Behavior*

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Pervez Musharraf. *In the Line of Fire: A Memoir*

IRAN AND THE ISLAMIC REVOLUTION

Baqer Moin. *Khomeini: Life of the Ayatollah*

Dr. Hamid Algar, translator. *Islam and Revolution 1: Writings and Declarations of Imam Khomeini (1941-1980)*

Nikki R. Keddie. *Modern Iran: Roots and Results of Revolution*

Said Amir Arjomand. *The Turban for the Crown: The Islamic Revolution in Iran*

Michael Ledeen. *The Iranian Time Bomb: The Mullah Zealots' Quest for Destruction*

William J. Daugherty. *In the Shadow of the Ayatollah: A CIA Hostage in Iran*

Ali M. Ansari. *Confronting Iran: The Failure of American Foreign Policy and the Next Great Conflict in the Middle East*

Mehdi Khalaji. *Apocalyptic Politics: On the Rationality of Iranian Policy*, Policy Focus #79, Washington Institute for Near East Policy, January 2008

Karim Sadjadpour. *Reading Khamenei: The World View of Iran's Most Powerful Leader*

Alireza Jafarzadeh. *The Iran Threat: President Ahmadinejad and the Coming Nuclear Crisis*

Yossi Melman and Meir Javedanfar. *The Nuclear Sphinx of Tehran: Mahmoud Ahmadinejad and the State of Iran*

Kasra Naji. *Ahmadinejad: The Secret History of Iran's Radical Leader*

Kenneth M. Pollack. *The Persian Puzzle: The Conflict between Iran and America*

Reza Pahlavi. *Winds of Change: The Future of Democracy in Iran*

Nasrin Alavi. *We Are Iran: The Persian Blogs*

Azar Nafisi. *Reading Lolita in Tehran*

Tom White, et al. (Voice of the Martyrs). *Iran, Desperate for God: An Oppressive Islamic State Drives Its People into the Arms of Christ*

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Susan Crimp and Joel Richardson, editors. *Why We Left Islam: Former Muslims Speak Out*

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Tass Saada. *Once an Arafat Man: The True Story of How a PLO Sniper Found a New Life*

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