



Press Releases

Iranian Schools Teach Children Hatred of Christians, Jews, United States

August 28, 2006 – New York – Iranian children are indoctrinated in basic hatred of Christians, Jews and the West, concludes a new study of textbooks used in Iran.

“Examining Iranian schoolbooks is a chilling reminder that the words of violent confrontation espoused by President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad are not mere rhetoric, but need to be regarded with the utmost gravity,” said David A. Harris, executive director of the American Jewish Committee. “To understand Iran’s defiance against the international community as it pursues development of nuclear weapons, one must read what Iran’s education system preaches.”

Researchers with the Center for Monitoring Peace in the Middle East (CMIP) analyzed 115 textbooks and teachers’ guides currently used in grades 1 to 12 in Iran. The full report, which will be released later this year by AJC and CMIP, offers a comprehensive survey of the official Iranian worldview to which school-age children are exposed. AJC and CMIP have previously jointly published studies of schoolbooks used in Saudi Arabia and Egypt.

Fighting American world hegemony in the name of Islam is a main focus of the Iranian educational system. Children are taught that America is the “Great Satan,” the “World Eater,” or the “Arrogant One.” For example, *Defense Readiness 1*, a teacher’s guide used in high school, states, “The students should have a heart overflowing of hatred towards Arrogance.”

Iranian textbooks reflect the ideology of the 1979 Islamic Revolution, which continues to spread its values to other nations in the Middle East and around the world.

“The war with the West is unavoidable and is part of the Islamic Revolution itself,” write Arnon Groiss and Nethanel Toobian, authors of the AJC-CMIP report. Indeed, a seventh grade book, *Islamic Culture and Religious Instruction*, states: “Now, in order to continue the Islamic Revolution, it is our duty to continue with all [our] power our revolt against the arrogant ones and the oppressors.”

Ayatollah Khomeini, the father of the Islamic Revolution in Iran, is quoted in an 11th grade textbook, *Islamic Viewpoint*, preaching confrontation with the non-Muslim world. “I am decisively announcing to the whole world that if the world-eaters wish to stand against our religion, we will stand against their whole world and will not cease until the annihilation of all them,” says Khomeini. “Either we all become free, or we will go to the greater liberty which is martyrdom. Either we will shake one another’s hands in the joy of the victory of Islam in the world, or all of us will turn to eternal life and martyrdom. In both cases, victory and success are ours.”

Meanwhile, Israel, which is not recognized in any way and whose name does not appear on any maps in Iranian schoolbooks, is portrayed as a danger to the whole world of Islam and as a tool in the hands of Islam’s enemy, America.

An 11th grade geography book states: “Another problem [faced by the Muslim countries] is the regime that occupies Jerusalem (Israel), which has been created in this area as a basis for America and other aggressive powers, with the aim of taking over Muslim lands.”

In the case of the inevitable Iranian war with the U.S., Iranian children are taught to regard Jews in “Palestine” as garbage to be cleared. *Gifts of Heaven*, a third grade picture storybook, depicts the

inhabitants of a tidy town chasing away a repugnant creature that spreads garbage wherever he goes. The Star of David, the Jewish symbol, is on the creature's arm, and in one of the pictures it is seen as part of the garbage.

"Degrading Jews and Judaism in Iranian schools reinforces the severity of the Iranian president's frequent threats to annihilate Israel," said Harris.

Iranian textbooks reflect "an educational system that prepares school children for war and martyrdom against the West in general, and against the United States and Israel in particular," conclude Groiss and Toobian. "The continuation of this way of thinking and indoctrination inside the system under the presidency of Mahmoud Ahmadinejad should alarm all individuals and governments that cherish the principles of peace and international cooperation."