

Culture

Iran Schoolbooks Teach Jihad, Martyrdom, Study Shows

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March 12, 2008

Washington (CNSNews.com)

- When third grade school children in Iran turn to page 113 of their textbook "Let's Read," they find a passage that says, "At that time, the Israeli officer pounded (three-year-old) Muhammad's head with the rifle's stock and his warm blood sprinkled upon his (six-year-old brother) Khaled's hands."

The Iranian textbook was published in 2004, before the controversial Mahmoud Ahmadinejad became president of Iran in 2005. In another third-grade text, "Gifts of Heaven," an illustration of a monster wearing the Star of David is seen going through a tidy Muslim town leaving garbage everywhere.

While those examples could seem shocking to some, it gets worse, said Arnon Groiss, director of research at the Center for Monitoring the Impact of Peace, who recently completed a [study](#) of 115 Iranian school textbooks. (Most of the books reviewed in the study had been published in 2004.)

"Indoctrination is less felt in the lower grades and increases in the higher grades," Groiss said, speaking at a forum Monday on the topic at the conservative Hudson Institute in Washington, D.C.

The books are part of an overall indoctrination effort aimed at school children. This effort includes rewritten Iranian history and the inclusion of Jihadist political views in science and geography texts, he said.

The seventh grade text "Islamic Culture and Religious Instruction," which refers to the West and Israel as the "Arrogant Ones," tells students that war is unavoidable and victory is guaranteed "in order to continue with all our power our revolution against the Arrogant Ones and the oppressors."

An eighth grade text says the "army of Islam would make the Arrogant Ones fall in holy Jihad and heavy attack."

"This is a form of child abuse rejected by all civilized countries," said Groiss, who for 30 years was an Arab-language journalist and is currently deputy director at Israel Broadcasting Authorities Arabic Radio. "This pictures a regime bent on global war to the point of self-destruction."

On page 20 of the high school textbook "Humanities," the United States is described as an "imperialist country" that "does not refrain from massacring people, from burying alive soldiers of the opposite side and from using mass-destruction weapons. It makes use of atomic bombs. ... It creates the greatest dictatorships and the violent and torturous security-oriented regimes, and defends them."

The good news could be that most Iranian families dismiss the teachings in the books, telling their children to simply memorize the material for the test, but nothing else, said the Iranian-born Shayan Arya at the forum.

"To the Iranian youth, America is the most popular country," said Arya, a member of the Constitutionalist

Party of Iran - an international group of one-time Iranian citizens pushing for the establishment of a liberal democracy in that country. However, even a small number influenced by the books could be damaging, he said.

"The Islamist regime does not need to be 100 percent successful, only a small portion," Arya said. "If 10 percent are exposed, that's 5 million. If 1 percent is exposed, that's 500,000. If it's a half of a percent, that's 250,000. That's more troops than we have in Iraq."

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