



After August 22

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Iran drew concern worldwide for refusing to respond in a timely fashion to the West's offer of an incentives package in exchange for Tehran's abandonment of its nuclear program. Iranian officials [brushed aside the June 29 deadline set by the West and said Iran would respond on August 22](#). Some, including [Farid Ghadry of the Reform Party of Syria](#) (as I reported several weeks ago) and [Islamic scholar Bernard Lewis](#), suggested that Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad and the mullahs in Iran's inner circle may have chosen that date in order to establish a connection with the Islamic prophet Muhammad's fabled Night Journey, during which Allah is said to have miraculously illuminated the night sky over Jerusalem to facilitate the prophet's journey from Mecca to Jerusalem, and thence to Paradise. Would Iran's

answer to the West's tribute package be to illuminate the night sky over Jerusalem again, this time with a nuclear device?

Obviously not – at least not on August 22 itself. That was a cue for some of the loudest advocates of Western appeasement and surrender to the global jihadists to condemn right-wing hysteria, despite the fact that no one who reported on this possibility had ever stated with any certainty that anything in particular would happen on August 22. [Brian Whitaker](#), a columnist for *The Guardian* who [once suggested that Gandhi would admire jihad](#), sneered: "The purpose of all this scaremongering is obviously to build up fears about an Iranian nuclear attack. The main obstacle to promoting such fears is that Iran does not possess any nuclear weap-

ons but Lewis seems determined not to let that stand in the way and apparently believes that Iran already has a fully-prepared arsenal." In dismissing these speculations as "scaremongering," however, Whitaker and others neglect to consider one possibility: that they were correct.

How could this be, when doomsday did not materialize on August 22? Because the Iranian regime has made its desire to illuminate the night sky over Jerusalem abundantly clear. The fact that they first set the date for their reply as August 22, and then delivered a reply that budged not one inch toward conciliation, and [made it clear](#) that they had no plans to give up their nuclear ambitions, suggests that such an attack is still in the cards. When Whitaker and his ilk dismiss "fears about an Iranian nuclear attack" as "scaremongering," they ignore both Iran's present bellicose activities and clear indications it has been giving of its future plans:

* According to the [Times of London](#), Iran "is seeking to import large consignments of bomb-making uranium from the African mining area that produced the Hiroshima bomb."

* On August 22 itself, an [Iranian warship fired upon a Romanian oil tanker](#) moored in the Persian Gulf; Iranian troops occupied the ship.

* Lethal roadside bombs strong enough to penetrate American and British tank armor are being turned out in large numbers by [three Ira-](#)

[nian factories](#). A large cache of other Iranian-made weapons and materiel [were discovered](#) last Monday in the Iraqi city of Um Qasr.

* After decisively altering the balance between Hizballah and Israel by [supplying military hardware](#) to the Lebanese Shi'ite terror organization, [Iran continues](#) even after the ceasefire announcement to ship arms and materiel to Hizballah.

* Ahmadinejad continues to indulge his now well-established taste for pugnacious rhetoric, [declaring last week](#): "If you want to have good relations with the Iranian people in the future, you should acknowledge the right and the might of the Iranian people, and you should bow and surrender to the might of the Iranian people. If you do not accept this, the Iranian people will force you to bow and surrender." Hardly a promising foundation for the negotiations that American officials so desperately want to initiate with Tehran.

* The Iranian President also threatened George W. Bush during his recent interview with Mike Wallace. Referring to the letter he sent several months ago to Bush [inviting him to accept Islam](#), Ahmadinejad [said to Wallace](#): "We are all free to choose. But please give him this message, sir: Those who refuse to accept an invitation will not have a good ending or fate."

This is in accord with Islamic tradition. Muhammad, the Prophet of Islam, tells his followers to call people to Islam before waging war

against them: "Fight in the name of Allah and in the way of Allah. Fight against those who disbelieve in Allah. Make a holy war...When you meet your enemies who are polytheists, invite them to three courses of action....Invite them to (accept) Islam; if they respond to you, accept it from them and desist from fighting against them....If they refuse to accept Islam, demand from them the Jizya [the tax on non-Muslims specified in Qur'an 9:29]. If they agree to pay, accept it from them and hold off your hands. If they refuse to pay the tax, seek Allah's help and fight them (Sahih Muslim 4294)." (Muhammad sent a letter much like Ahmadinejad's to one of Ahmadinejad's early predecessors, Chosroes, emperor of Persia - who contemptuously tore it to pieces. Muhammad, hearing of this, called upon Allah to tear the Persian emperor and his followers to pieces (Bukhari, vol. 5, book 64, no. 4424)). Ahmadinejad has followed Muhammad's instruction to the letter both by calling Bush to Islam, and then by

warning that his refusal would have bad consequences.

* [Iran has in the last few days](#) conducted large-scale military maneuvers and tested a new short-range missile.

* Ahmad Khatami of the Iranian Assembly of Experts [said last week](#) on government-controlled Iranian television that if Bush and Olmert "decided to display the slightest aggression against Islamic Iran, they should...fear the day that our missiles, with a range of 2,000 kilometers, land in the heart of Tel Aviv....They should know that playing with Islam is like playing with a lion's tail."

* Ahmadinejad [continues to call](#) for "elimination of Zionist regime."

August 22 has come and gone. But the threat of Iran continues to hang over the world. Those who choose to ignore or downplay it may be in before too long for a most unpleasant surprise, courtesy of Mahmoud Ahmadinejad.

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