



A monster with chutzpah

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Give Iranian President Mah moud Ahmadinejad credit for chutzpah: He has asked for permission to visit Ground Zero while he's in New York for a U.N. session.

In other words, a request to visit the site of the worst terrorist attack in history - from a guy who's involved in terrorism up to his neck.

Iran's government has actively and proudly supported terrorism for decades. It created and directs Hezbollah while funding Hamas and other Palestinian terrorist organizations.

Iran coordinates its terrorist sponsorship largely through its Ministry of Intelligence and Security and via the Iranian Revolutionary Guard Corps. The Guard is also Ahmadine-

jad's chief power base - he's an IRGC veteran.

At the time of the Iranian Revolution, Ahmadinejad was a member of the executive committee of the student group that initially seized the U.S. embassy and took dozens of U.S. diplomats hostage. During his later time in the Guard, he was a member of the assassination team that killed several exiled Iranian Kurd dissidents in Vienna in 1989.

One of the Guard's five branches, the Quds (Jerusalem) Force, bears primary responsibility for coordinating with terrorist groups and sleeper networks around the globe - as well as insurgent groups and militias in Iraq now targeting American forces.

* On Feb. 11, the United States reported that Iran was the source of highly lethal explosively formed projectiles (EFPs) being provided to Iraqi Shiite insurgent groups. This Iranian ordinance had already killed 170 U.S. soldiers. Two months later, the United States stated that Iran was providing EFPs to Sunni insurgent groups as well.

Iran also has a warm relationship with al Qaeda - aiding it in the run-up to 9/11, and ever since:

* The al Qaeda-Iran relationship began in late 1991 or early 1992 when Iranian agents met with al Qaeda leaders in Sudan and informally agreed to provide mutual support for attacks against Israel and the United States.

* Not long after this initial meeting, al Qaeda operatives and trainers went to Iran, where they received training in explosives.

* After al Qaeda was forced to relocate from Sudan to Afghanistan, Iranian agents continued to meet with al Qaeda leadership figures. Iranian officials often accommodated al Qaeda operatives by not stamping their passports - facilitating covert travel through Iran.

* The 9/11 Commission Report notes that eight to 10 of the 9/11 hijackers traveled through Iran between October 2000 and February 2001.

* After the liberation of Afghanistan, several top al Qaeda figures took refuge in Iran.

Iran's various terror puppets have also taken many other American lives:

* Hezbollah was founded in 1982 in the Bekaa Valley by Lebanese Shiite clerics educated in Iran. The IRGC established training camps in Lebanon where Hezbollah recruits trained alongside members of other national and transnational terrorist organizations. Hezbollah members train in Iran on IRGC bases and facilities.

* Before 9/11, Hezbollah was responsible for more American deaths than any other terrorist group, having carried out the deadly 1983 attack on the Marine barracks in Beirut, which killed 200 American servicemen.

* Saudi Hezbollah, which also receives Iranian support, executed a truck bombing at the Khobar Towers housing complex in Saudi Arabia that killed 19 Americans in 1996.

Allowing the president of the world's leading state sponsor of terrorism to visit Ground Zero would be an obscene slap at the victims and survivors of the 9/11 attacks. The request itself is an insult of the worst kind.