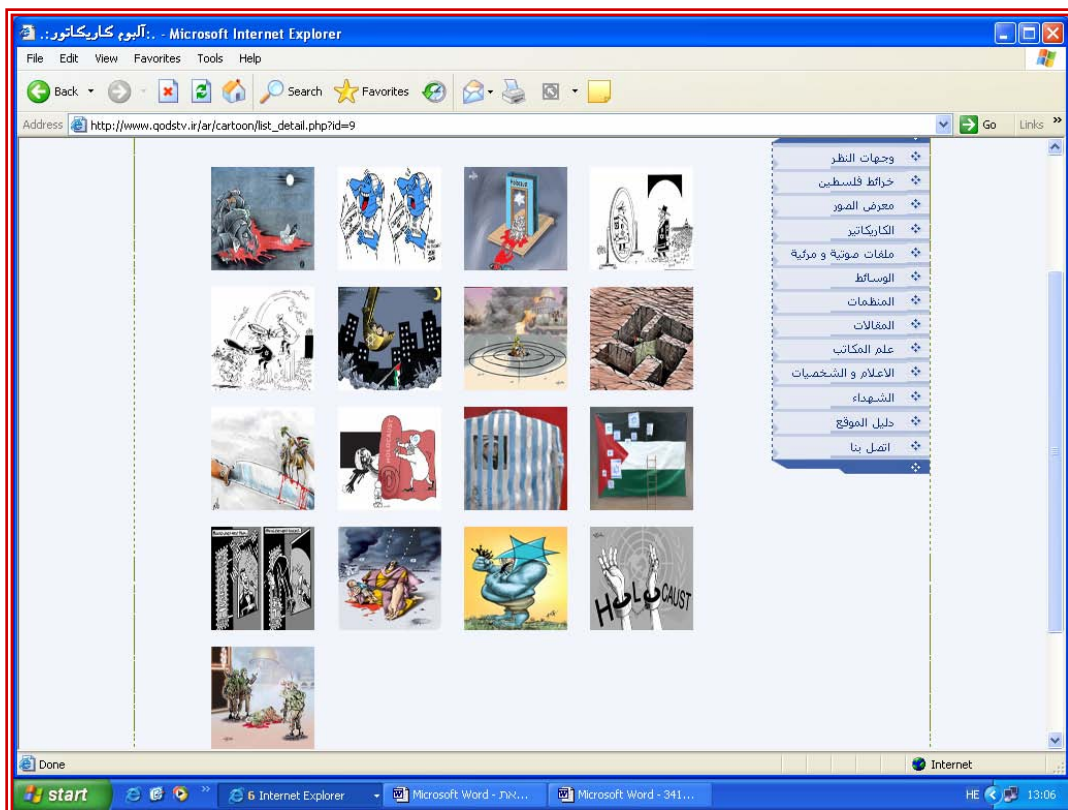




Intelligence and Terrorism Information Center
at the Center for Special Studies (C.S.S)

December 18, 2006

The Iranian regime operates many Arabic-language Internet sites to spread its radical Islamic ideology to the Arab and Muslim populations around the world. They preach violence and hatred of Israel, the Jewish people, the United States and the West. At the same time Iran strictly censors Western Internet sites.



Using cartoons to spread hatred for Israel and the Jewish people: a page of cartoons from Al-Quds TV's Website, most of them dealing with Holocaust denial and equating Jews and Nazis.

Overview

1. The Iranian regime makes a great effort to export Khomeini's radical Islamic ideology. One of its objectives is to advance Iran's aspirations for hegemony in the Middle East and another is to support its political ideology and propaganda campaign against the United States and Israel.

2. To that end the Iranian regime makes extensive use of the Internet, which it perceives as an effective means for spreading propaganda and sending messages to its various target audiences in the Middle East and beyond. The Iranians have established a broad Internet presence of sites in many languages, primarily Farsi, Arabic and English. They also operate sites in Russian, French, Turkish, Spanish, Urdu and Albanian. All the sites reflect the same political propaganda orientation which serves Iran's strategic needs. The technical aspects are dealt with by Iranian Internet companies, but also by companies in the United States and Canada (See below).

3. A central target audience is the Arab public in the Middle East and beyond. The Arabic-language sites spread radical Islamic ideology, hatred for the West, loathing for Israel, anti-Semitism and Holocaust denial. They also support terrorism and violence (including fostering the suicide bomber cult), and the terrorist organizations, especially Hezbollah and Hamas.

4. The Iranian Internet sites in Arabic can be divided into three main groups:

- A. Sites of the Iranian news agencies, such as IRNA, IRIBNEWS, Mehr News Agency and IQNA.
- B. Sites of the Iranian TV channels in Arabic, such as Al-Alam, Al-Kawthar and Al-Quds.
- C. Sites dedicated to Iranian leaders, such as Ali Khamenei and the blog of Iranian president Mahmoud Ahmadinejad.

5. In addition, Iran supports a broad network of sites operated by Hezbollah, where Arabic is the language of choice. Their contents provide indirect support for the Iranian regime's propaganda and indoctrination.¹

6. An examination of the Iranian sites' Internet service providers² shows that the sites belonging to the Iranian agencies are supported by Internet American and Canadian companies. The media sites and sites of the Iranian leaders use Iranian companies, possibly governmental or government-supervised.

7. **While the Iranians make extensive use of the Internet** to spread the regime's ideas, conversely, they impose **strict censorship** on the Internet (which has gained great popularity in Iran³) as a conduit for importing ideas into the country. For example, Iranian Internet surfers who tried to log on to the popular video site at www.youtube.com saw an announcement stating that "according to the laws of the Islamic Republic of Iran, access to this site is unauthorized." A similar announcement was seen by surfers trying to access Iranian opposition sites. It has also been reported that sites such as the New York Times have been blocked (apparently for a number of days) and Wikipedia (AP, Tehran, December 5).

8. Reporters Without Borders warned that the censorship imposed by the Iranian regime was an attempt to create "digital borders" and prevent Iranians from accessing culture and information from abroad. During October 2006 Reporters Without Borders put Iran on its list of the **13 worst "Internet**

¹ For further information see our Bulletin entitled "Terrorism and Internet: Hezbollah's widespread use of the Internet as a means to distribute anti-Israeli, anti-Jewish, and anti-American incitement as part of the war for the hearts and minds," at http://www.terrorism-info.org.il/malam_multimedia/English/eng_n/html/hezbollah_int_e.htm and http://www.terrorism-info.org.il/malam_multimedia/English/eng_n/pdf/hezbollah_int_e.pdf.

² According to the Haganah and Whois sites.

³ The Inter Press Service (IPS) news agency reported that more than 10% of Iran's 70 million inhabitants are connected to the Internet and that the number constantly increases. The Iranian regime is aware of that and appointed a committee to supervise the use of unauthorized sites (for details see the November 27 article by Kimia Salani, IPS)

enemies,” the countries which impose the strictest censorship on the Internet (along with Belarus, Burma, China, Cuba, Egypt, North Korea, Saudi Arabia, Syria, Tunisia, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan and Vietnam). (AP, Tehran, December 5).

9. The following are Iran’s main Arabic-language Internet sites:

Iranian News Agency Sites

IRNA, at www.irna.com



The IRNA Arabic-language home page: Iranian president Mahmoud Ahmadinejad is featured in a number of articles (November 15, 2006).

10. IRNA (Islamic Republic News Agency) is Iran’s main news agency. The Website appears in eight languages, among them Farsi, Arabic, English, Russian, Turkish and Spanish. Most of the articles deal with Iran. Important Iranian public figures are often quoted, especially the president, Ahmadinejad. They send messages in the spirit of radical Islamic ideology and express hatred for Israel and the West.

11. Examples of the site’s contents are:

A. On November 27, 2006, Iranian foreign minister Mamucmehr Mottaki was quoted as saying that “the occupiers of Iraq need [the support of] the countries [of the world] to get them out of the [Iraqi] mud.” On November 30 a senior member of the Iranian parliament was quoted as saying that “the United States will pay a heavy price for any measure taken against Iran.” On the same day the text of a speech by Ahmadinejad was also posted, in which he called upon the American people to support the Palestinians against “the Zionist oppressors” and to oppose the policies of the American government in Iraq.

B. On November 26 the site’s homepage featured a posting quoting the chairman of the Iranian parliament as saying that “America [and the West] is enraged with the [spread of] the Islamic revolution, because it returned Islam to the bosom of [Muslim] society.” He later says that “today all humanity witnesses the intensive activity in the Islamic world to return to Islam its glory and that presents a formidable obstacle to the [United States’] aspirations of [world] domination.”

12. The site’s technical details:

A. **Name:** www.irna.com

B. **IP address:** 209.1.163.102

C. **Internet access provider:** Savvis, Cary, NC, USA

IRIBNEWS, at www.trib.com



The IRIBNEWS homepage: the pictures of Khomeini and Khamenei in the upper right corner are part of the masthead. Khamenei also appears in the lead article, under the heading “The IR Leader Hails the Military,” according to which “...the armed forces in the Islamic Republic of Iran take front [sic] in defense of justice, rights of the public and the underprivileged and perform as the strong bulwark of national security and values of Islam and the Revolution...”⁴ (November 22, 2006).

13. IRIB (Islamic Republic of Iran Broadcasting) has Websites in Farsi, Arabic and English. It features quotes by Khamenei and senior Iranian officials and spreads the ideology of the Islamic revolution. It has a link called “The Intifada Link” which posts articles identifying with the violent Palestinian terrorist campaign against Israel and manipulative items meant to support terrorism and violence. For example, on November 26 an article was posted entitled “The pressure of the resistance (i.e., violence and terrorism) forces the Zionist entity to retreat from Gaza,” ignoring the ceasefire understanding achieved between Palestinian chairman Abu Mazen and Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert which led to the IDF’s withdrawal from the Gaza Strip.

⁴ The translation was taken from the site’s English version.



Preaching the destruction of the State of Israel in a link called “Share Your Opinion” on the IRIBNEWS Arabic-language site. The headline reads, “Hamas: Israel must be destroyed.” Participants from all over the Arab-Muslim world expressed their support for the destruction of Israel (November 12, 2006).

14. The site’s technical details:

A. **Name:** www.irib.com

B. **IP address:** 62.220.119.50

C. **Internet access provider:** (apparently a government company)

D. **Contact person:** Mahdi Afrasyabi, M&O Technical Department Office

E. **Address:** Valie Asr Ave., Tehran

F. **Telephone:** 98-21-2051770

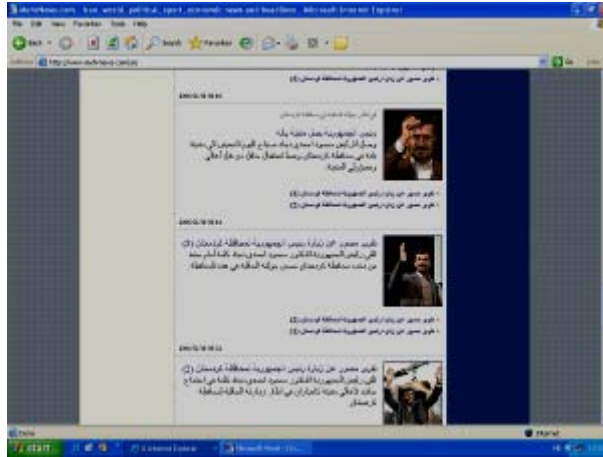
Mehr News Agency, at www.mehrnews.com



The Mehr News Agency Arabic language homepage: A Magen David (the symbol of Jews and Israel) going in flames often appears on the site.

15. Mehr (“affection” in Farsi) News Agency is an important Iranian agency, with Websites in Farsi, Arabic, English and Urdu. The site features articles supporting the Palestinian “resistance” (i.e., terrorism) and Hezbollah, which tries to represent the second Lebanon war as a “victory.” Anti-Semitic motifs sometimes appear, and the site often quotes Mahmoud Ahmadinejad and Ali Khamenei.

16. Mehr’s November 16 homepage featured a Magen David in flames. The motif appears regularly on the site, as it does on other Iranian sites and the Hamas Farsi site. To the left is a link to a letter sent by Khamenei to Hassan Nasrallah, congratulating him on his victory over the “plundering Zionist entity” and praising him for his jihad against the “Zionist entity.”



The Iranian president's personality cult: part of the Mehr News Agency Website's homepage. Mahmoud Ahmadinejad appears in three articles, one right after the other, dealing with his visits to various districts in Iran (November 16, 2006).

17. The site's technical details:

A. **Name:** www.mehrnews.com

B. **IP address:** 83.138.167.98

C. **Internet access provider:** Managed Hosting, San Antonio, TX, USA

IQNA, the Iranian Quran News Agency, at iqna.ir/ar



The IQNA News Agency Arabic language homepage: In the upper right corner the inscription within the circle reads "The Jihad University." The headline of the second article reads, "Jihad is the supreme commandment of Islam" (November 21, 2006).

18. IQNA (the Iranian Quran News Agency) deals with religious matters in the spirit of the ideology of the Islamic revolution in Iran. The site appears in Farsi, Arabic, Turkish, French, Urdu, Spanish and Albanian. The Arabic version emphasizes Shi'ite-Sunni unity and concept of jihad against Israel and the West. The site glorifies terrorist actions, for example, on December 10 an article appeared announcing the Tehran Film Festival, during which films would be shown about "the heroic activities of Hezbollah," among them suicide bombing attacks against Israel.

19. The site's technical details:

A. **Name:** www.iqna.ir/ar

B. **IP address:** 63.138.167.98

C. **Internet access provider:** MCI Communications Services, Inc. The Webhost is Canadian, but its details are not available.

Iranian Arabic-Language Television Channel Websites

Al-Alam (“the world”), at www.alalam.com



The Al-Alam Arabic-language homepage for December 4, 2006: The main article deals with the “Lebanese resistance” (i.e., Hezbollah) accompanied by a picture taken at a Hezbollah rally a few days previously, where Lebanese and Hezbollah flags were flown. Directly below is an article dealing with Palestinian prime minister Ismail Haniya’s visit to Damascus. Next to it is one about president Hugo Chavez’s victory in the Venezuelan elections.

20. Al-Alam is an Iranian Arabic-language satellite news channel which began broadcasting in January 2004. The site has Arabic, Farsi and English versions. It surveys world news, with an emphasis on the Arab world and the Palestinian issue with an anti-Israeli anti-American attitude. The IDF is called the “occupation army,” the American forces in Iraq are the “American occupation forces,” and Palestinian terrorist activity is called *maqawamah*, “resistance.”

21. The site’s technical details:

A. **Name:** www.alalam.ir

B. **IP address:** 62.220.121.62

C. **Internet access provider:** IRIB, Iran

D. **Contact person:** Mahdi Afrasyabi, M&O Technical Department Office

E. **Address:** Jame Jam Ave., Tehran

F. **Telephone:** 98-21-2051770

Al-Kawthar TV, at www.alkawthartv.ir



The Al-Kawthar TV homepage: The headline links to a news summary of articles about Iranian atomic research, mostly statements made by Iranian public figures.

22. This is the homepage of the Iran's Al-Kawthar, an Arabic-language satellite TV channel which was set up in 1980 to disseminate the Islamic revolution's ideology to residents of the Arab states. In the past it was known as the Sahar channel, often reporting on Hezbollah operatives and broadcasting programs dealing with the Iranian revolution.⁵ The site features anti-Semitic motifs and is integrated into Iranian Holocaust denial campaign.

⁵ Al-Kawthar is the name of a spring in the Muslim paradise. One of the treatises written by the Ayatollah Khomeini is called *Al-Kawthar*.)



Using the Internet to disseminate anti-Semitic motifs: presentation of scenes from an overtly anti-Semitic program called “The role of the Jews in distorting Islamic history” (November 27, 2006).



Scenes from “The myth of the Holocaust,” a program produced by the station. According to the program, the use of gas chambers to kill the Jews during the Holocaust is a Jewish fabrication and that worse holocausts occurred in history but have not attracted as much attention.

23. The technical details of the site are not currently available.

Al-Quds (“Jerusalem”) TV, at www.qodstv.ir/ar/index.php



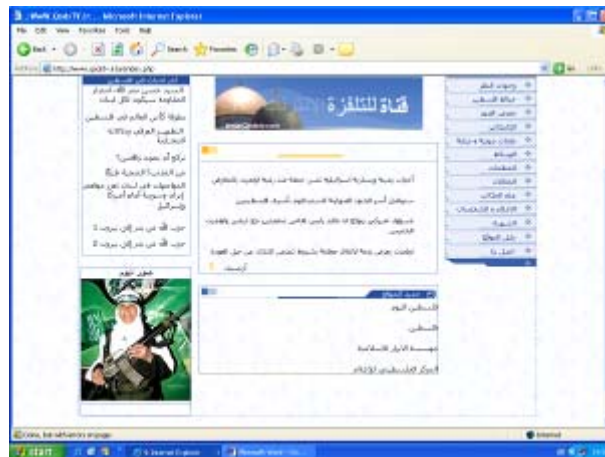
The Al-Quds homepage

24. This Website was launched recently. Its main emphasis is on the “Palestinian resistance” (i.e., Palestinian terrorism) and it preaches hatred for Israel and the United States. The site appears in Farsi, Arabic and English and has a daily edition of photographs. Surfers can click on links to Hamas and Palestinian Islamic Jihad Websites. The site features anti-Semitic cartoons (See first page) and information about Palestinian shaheeds (“martyrs for the sake of Allah”) who carry out suicide bombing attacks in Israel, including Wafaa Idris, the first female suicide bomber. It also features many articles about Hezbollah and quotes by its general secretary, Hassan Nasrallah.

25. The site also posts articles denying the Holocaust. For example, a link to the “Audio/Visual Gallery” has two programs from Sahar (Al-Kawthar) claiming that no Jews died in gas chambers during the Holocaust and that the Jews contrived it all. In addition, they claim that similar holocausts were carried out by the Americans in Saigon and Hiroshima, but that they received less attention than the Jewish Holocaust.



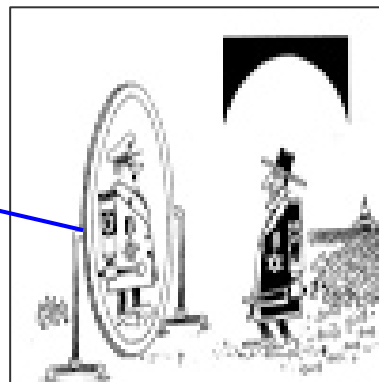
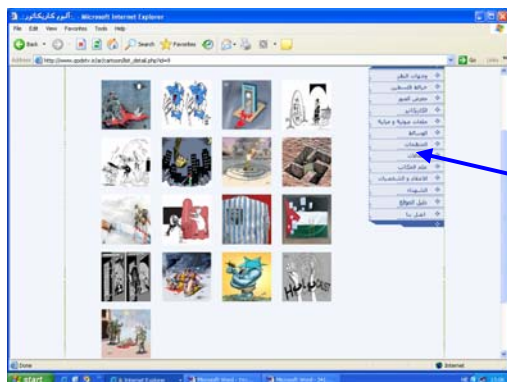
An anti-Semitic cartoon which appeared on the site, drawn by militant Palestinian cartoonist Omayya Joha, known for her affiliation with and support of Hamas. She is one of the most vicious anti-Israeli anti-Jewish cartoonists in the Arab world. A stereotype Jew covers a camera lens with his bloody hand next to an injured Palestinian; the inscription reads “No photographs allowed.”



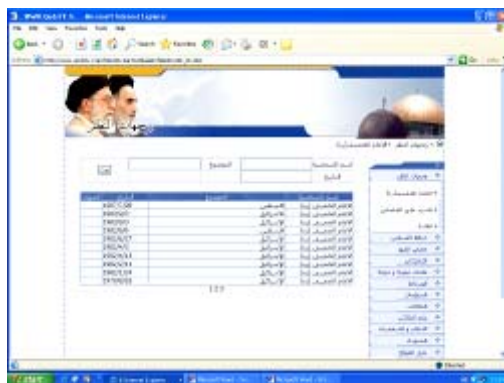
Al-Quds’ “picture of the day” for November 28, 2006: the female suicide bomber who carried out an attack against IDF forces in the Gaza Strip on November 23, 2006.



From Al-Quds’ shaheed link: most of the shaheeds shown belonged to Hamas and most were suicide bombers. Links lead to detailed information about each of them, and all are represented as role models.



The Al-Quds cartoon page. Most of them deal with Holocaust denial and the likening of Jews to Nazis. The one in the lower right-hand corner shows the “O”s in the word “Holocaust” as a pair of handcuffs; in the background is the UN emblem. The one in the upper right corner shows a stereotype Jew looking in the mirror; he is reflected as a Nazi.



The “Point of View” link shows Khomeini and Khamenei. The “points of view” are the Ayatollah Khomeini’s opinions of Israel and the Palestinian problem. The prevalent opinion is that the State of Israel should be destroyed.



“Photo of the day” from the “Photo Gallery” link, December 11, 2006: an American soldier on the background of a photomontage of the American and Israeli flags, blanket-covered corpses and what is apparently a military cemetery.

26. The site’s technical details:

A. **Name:** www.qodstv.ir/ar/index.php

B. **IP address:** 62.220.119.60

C. **Internet access provider:** IRIB, Iran

D. **Contact person:** Mahdi Afrasyabi, M&O Technical Department Office

E. **Address:** Jame Jam Ave., Tehran

Iranian Leader Websites

Ali Khamenei's Website, at www.leader.ir



The site's homepage: Khamenei and Khomeini

27. The Iranians sponsor Websites fostering the personality cults of the “leader” Ali Khamenei and their president, Mahmoud Ahmadinejad.

28. Ali Khamenei's Website appears in Farsi, Arabic, English, French and Urdu. It often quotes statements made by Ali Khamenei, texts of his speeches, information of his doings, his biography, etc. It also features many pictures of him. He is referred to as *al-qa'id* (“the leader”) and sometimes as *wali amr al-muslimin* (“the leader of the Muslims,” the epithet of a sultan or Muslim caliph). The first refers to him as a political and military leader, the second as leader of the Islamic nation and not only a leader of the Shi'ites in Iran.



The site's homepage for December 20, 2006. The headline reads, "The leader [Khamenei]: the victory in Lebanon and the 'resistance' in the 33-day war [i.e., the second Lebanon war] are a source of pride for Muslims."

29. The site's technical details:

A. **Name:** www.leader.ir

B. **IP address:** 62.220.121.130

C. **Internet access provider:** IRIB, Iran

D. **Contact person:** Mahdi Afrasyabi, M&O Technical Department Office

E. **Address:** Jame Jam Ave., Tehran

Iranian president Mahmoud Ahmadinejad's blog, at www.ahmadinejad.ir



The November 30, 2006 homepage of Ahmadinejad's blog: his speech to the American people.

30. The site appears in Farsi, Arabic, English and French, and is either written by him or others who write for him in the first person singular. The site posts emails sent by surfers expressing support for him.

31. The site's technical details:

A. **Name:** www.ahmadinejad.ir

B. **IP address:** 217.218.165.53

C. **Internet access provider:** Datacommunications Company of Iran

D. **Contact person:** Hamid Alipour Information Technology Company

E. **Address:** P.O. Box 16315-737 Tehran

F. **Telephone:** 98-21-84803400