

How to alienate the Muslim world

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It is probably very difficult, maybe even quite impossible, for the majority of us mere mortals to fully understand the sheer pressure imposed on politicians as they campaign for an election, let alone the strain on the candidates and their staff when running for the job of most powerful man on earth, a job which might very well go to a woman at the next U.S. election.

The pressures of the campaign often force candidates to say and do many things they don't mean or want just to get elected. They will kiss countless babies, even if they can't stand the smell and the cries of youngsters. But they will do it for the photo op – and the vote. They will often make promises they know they cannot keep; and they will at times issue threats they also know they could never implement. So when New York Senator Hillary Clinton, who is vying for the Democratic Party's nomination in the 2008 presidential elections, says on national television that she will "obliterate" Iran if the Islamic republic were to launch nuclear weapons on Israel, that statement needs to be taken with a grain of salt – a very large grain of salt.

As president of the United States, Hillary Clinton would certainly have the firepower to obliterate not only Iran but the entire Middle East, if she chose to. The question here is twofold: First, what is at stake? Iran is a country slightly larger in size than Alaska and with a population of almost 66 million people, the majority of whom are under 25 years of age; and yes indeed, the majority would be delighted to see the end of the mullahs' regime. However, in saying she is ready to sacrifice the entire country of Iran, Mrs. Clinton only reinforces the theocracy ruling clique in the country.

What she should have said instead, is something along these lines: "If Iran were to attack any country in the world with nuclear weapons, not just Israel, and if I were president of the United States of America, our response would be immediate, firm and decisive. We would retaliate with tactical nuclear weapons against multiple military facilities in Iran, reducing their military capacity considerably.

To begin with, we would strike at every known or suspected nuclear facility in the country. Within hours our carrier-borne military aircraft and submarine-based tactical missiles would completely destroy Iran's air force, leaving the country vulnerable to ground attacks.

"We would authorize attacks against members of the Iranian leadership who ordered the first strike; be they political, military or religious. Those who do not perish in the initial strike would be tracked down and brought to an international court of justice where they would face charges of crimes against humanity. We would rescind the status of 'Foreign Terrorist Organization' currently imposed on the opposition Mujahedeen-e-Khalq (MeK), recognizing it as a legitimate resistance organization, and would provide its members with all the support they need – political, financial, military as well as logistics – enabling them to overthrow the current regime in Tehran and liberate the Iranian people.

"Our fight is not with the people of Iran, with whom the United States has no quarrel and no ill intent."

Slightly more presidential than "I would obliterate Iran..." Wouldn't you say?

The second question is if indeed as president Mrs. Clinton were to order the obliteration of Iran, would the Pentagon carry out those orders?