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JEWISH LEADER MALCOLM HOENLEIN SAYS IRAN IS TRAINING TERRORISTS IN LATIN AMERICA

Fundamentalist threat pushing Arab society to ally with Israel, per AJC Executive Director David Harris

FORT LEE, NJ -- Conference of Presidents Executive Vice Chair Malcolm Hoenlein warns that Iran is immersed in efforts to use South America as a means of exporting terrorism worldwide.



Conf. of President's Malcolm Hoenlein

In an exclusive Shalom TV interview, the Jewish leader says that he has tried for two years to get the US Administration and both houses of Congress to pay attention to the growing threat.

"Iran has opened ten embassies in South America," explained Hoenlein. "They have sent in countless missionaries. They are investing hundreds of millions of dollars. They are working through [President Hugo] Chavez of Venezuela, with the president of Ecuador, of Bolivia, with Cuba. They are working with Mexican drug cartels smuggling people into the United States. There are weapons involved; there's the training of terrorists. They're bringing Hezbollah in.

"This is a launching ground--the soft underbelly of America. They can penetrate it ideologically [and] politically. I hope people will wake up."

American Jewish Committee Executive Director David Harris, who also appeared on the national cable network, noted that Arab societies "are frightened to death of Iran, and understand, at the end of the day, that Israel is not their real enemy." Per Harris, the real enemy of Arab states is Iran and its fundamentalist proxies.



AJC Exec. Director David Harris

"With no love for Israel, no readiness to join any pro-Israel group, they're saying the real threat does not come from Jerusalem or Tel Aviv; it comes from Tehran, it comes from Hamas, it comes from Hezbollah, it comes from other radical groups like Al-Qaeda.

"So strangely enough, Israel, in a sense, becomes their de facto ally. Will those voices [in the Arab world] prevail is the question--but they exist. And that's why I think there is an element of hope in all this."

For example, "there is a rare convergence of interests among the United States, Israeli leadership, and Palestinian leadership today that can move the peace process forward. [Palestinian National Authority Chairman] Mahmoud Abbas needs a peace process to distinguish himself from Hamas, [Israel Prime Minister] Ehud Olmert has got the best friend in the White House he's ever likely to see, and President Bush wants to be remembered for something notable," concluded Harris.

Shalom TV is America's Jewish cable television network, available across the country on Comcast, as well as on Time Warner Cable of New York and New Jersey, and Blue Ridge Communications. The cultural service features programs of interest to the North American Jewish community. Current schedule information is available online at www.shalomtv.com.