

TRANSCRIPT: SEAN HANNITY RADIO INTERVIEW WITH JOEL C.
ROSENBERG

Topic: Iran threat and *The Tehran Initiative*

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Sean Hannity: Now we went through in some specificity and some detail what was going on with the President of the United States and now that we have Iran basically trying to execute a maneuver to execute people on American soil and this followed up by this threat by Iran to go forward with putting ships off our coast. So the question is why do they feel so emboldened? Why do they feel that this okay that they can get away with this? Anyway a friend of mine is on our Newsmaker Line – it's Joel Rosenberg. He's a former aide to Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu. He's a *New York Times* best-seller, a terrific writer. What scares me when I read his books is how accurate they are, based in reality that they are. He's got a new book, *The Tehran Initiative*, which is going to be released on Tuesday which represents his seventh novel. Joel, welcome back. How are you?

Rosenberg: Doing well. Good to be with you Sean.

Hannity: So here we got an alleged plot – we've got Iranian forces trying to enlist a used car salesman and a Mexican drug gang to plan to kill Saudi Arabia's U.S. ambassador as he dined at a Washington restaurant, and the question is what is Obama going to do?

Rosenberg: Well, so far, nothing. At this point the Iranians declared war on the United States in 1979, declared war on Israel in 1979. Iran has been killing Americans and Israelis in Lebanon, in Saudi Arabia, in Afghanistan, in Iraq and now they were planning to bring their terrorist attack inside the United States, in our nation's capital, which is where I live so I'm particularly concerned with that. And yet Iran has never paid a price, a decisive price. And that is the question now: Is this President – does he have a clear and specific and decisive plan to stop the Iranian nuclear and terrorism threat, or does one of the Republican candidates have such a plan, because right now the Iranians have no fear of us, no sense that we

would contain them, much less bring a regime change and overthrow them.

Hannity: Well this is the key. Its interesting because I brought this up in great specificity – I went through this whole issue yesterday – and you know in one sense I feel terrible for Israel which is out there alone by itself half the time. And they’ve been literally -- poor Prime Minister Netanyahu gets, you know, cast aside when he goes to visit his closest ally, the President of the United States in the White House. Then he’s on a plane and he’s coming over to the U.S. The U.S. had promised Israel it wouldn’t never ask for a return to the ’67 borders, and on his way to the country meaning a visit to the U.S. and Washington he gets sandbagged with that. Now here it is a real and present danger to the entire world and we are told that it could be months and they will have nuclear weapons. What is the President going to do, or is Israel going to have to act alone here?

Rosenberg: Well, this is why I actually wrote this novel, *The Tehran Initiative*, because what it does is it tries to capture people’s imagination by fiction -- in a way that many people are not paying attention -- to just how real this threat can be. What’s odd about this novel is several things. First, it does imagine an American President putting enormous – and undue -- pressure on the Israelis not to hit Iran’s nuclear facilities even as Israel faces a Second Holocaust. But actually it begins this new, this *Tehran Initiative* begins with an Iranian terror cell in the United States targeting and actually unleashing an attack in New York, not Washington, against the President of the United States, the President of Egypt and the Prime Minister of Israel. That’s how the book opens. Now, thank God for our FBI, for the DEA and our other intelligence forces that stopped this most recent plot. But this is showing the brazen audacity of the Iranian Government. They have no fear of this President, of this Government.

Hannity: That was my point yesterday

Rosenberg: And they smell blood in the water. Remember Sean, you and I have talked about it over the years -- Prime Minister Netanyahu knows this -- they are not driven by normal radicalism. They are certainly radical, but they are driven by a Shia Islamic End Times theology that believes that it is

foreordained by Allah that the United States will be destroyed, just as they believed that the Soviet Union was predestined to implode back...

Hannity: They believe *we* are predestined to implode, and they are predestined to rise to power and have this caliphate.

Rosenberg: Exactly – and so what I try to do fictionally in *The Tehran Initiative* is portray how do you play this thing out. In a sense, this novel is a war game looking at current conditions and saying, “What if the United States doesn’t do anything? What if the world powers do not take decisive action to neutralize the Iranian threat? What would Israel do? Would they launch a pre-emptive military strike?” Right now in the novel, fictionally, the United States President sends a senior U.S. official to Israel to pressure Israel not to [strike Iran]. And what did we see happen just a few weeks ago? President Obama sends Secretary of Defense Panetta to Israel not to even consider a pre-emptive military strike against Iran. Look, you don’t want war. I don’t want war. No one in your audience wants war. But we are getting dangerously close to the point where there is no deterrent seen by the Iranians, up to and including their feeling that they could attack inside the American capital with impunity.

Hannity: You know, let me ask you this because I’ve known you many, many years now, and we’ve become friends over the years. Look, you really take current events and you put it into novel form -- this goes back I think your first novel was, *The Last Jihad*.

Rosenberg: It was, and it was on your show when I launched that.

Hannity: Okay, and I’ve read a lot of your books -- I’m a little bit behind -- and you’ve gone through a series of scenarios in studying the Middle East and understanding jihad has been your study for a couple of decades. You talk about *The Ezekiel Option* and leading up to *The Twelfth Imam* and now *The Tehran Initiative*, and so it seems to me the world doesn’t understand what you do, what Benjamin Netanyahu knows, what I know and a few others -- what George Bush, I think, knew and that is the threat of radical Islam and radical Islamists is real. The desire to destroy at any costs is real. The desire for world domination is real. And their willingness to

sacrifice their lives in the process this belief system that virgins await them is real. It seems that people still to this day are having a hard time wrapping their arms around the concept that modern day evil and a desire for a modern day Holocaust exists.

Rosenberg: That's right Sean, and I remember back to that first -- it was November 2002 when you had me on. It was the first interview I ever had, for the novel, *The Last Jihad*, which put readers in the cockpit of a jet plane hijacked by radical Islamic terrorists, coming in on a kamikaze attack mission into an American city. Now I had written it nine months before 9/11, and I remember you and I talking about it the fact that you and I had been on a Lear Jet actually when you were working on a book of yours, and just talking about, "Is that possible that someone could hijack a jet and do this?" And obviously that's what happened. I'm not saying that I got it right some how prophetically. But the point is we could extrapolate out what these radicals are saying and the threats they are making and imagine what they could do if given the chance. And that's what I'm trying to do with *The Tehran Initiative* and other novels, because we have to understand that to misunderstand the nature and threat of evil is to risk being blindsided by it. And I think that is the central challenge of our time right now. We have an Administration right now that is making mistakes on so many fronts that its hard to add them all up. But probably the most severe, ultimately, would be to allow Iran to get nuclear weapons and the ballistic missiles to deliver them and the terrorist forces to give some of those warheads to and suddenly get hit -- not by something as catastrophic as 9/11, but something exponentially worse. And yet we neither have an administration that is dealing with a clear, decisive, specific plan to neutralize Iran, and right now its time to tell the Republican candidates that the economy is a critical issue, it's the top issue, but you have to have a plan to deal with Iran. I think it should be asked in debates. It should be asked by reporters. And you and others can press these guys, because they've got some bold economic plans on the table, some more than others, but I'm not hearing right now how to deal with Iran.

Hannity: Is there anybody you support for President, for example I mean Rick Santorum has never been stronger than when he talks about national security issues.

- Rosenberg: Nobody in the field understands the Iranian threat and the threat of the Shia eschatology or End Times theology of the Twelfth Imam better than Rick Santorum.
- Hannity: Explain the Twelfth Imam, because most people don't understand it, because Ahmadinejad believes this himself.
- Rosenberg: That's right. Both the Ayatollah Khamenei -- the Supreme Leader -- and [President] Ahmadinejad are not just Shia Muslims. They are also known as "Twelvers." They believe that the end of the world has come. They believe that the Twelfth Imam, or the Madi -- this so-called Islamic Messiah -- is coming at any moment. And third they believe the way to hasten or accelerate the coming of the Twelfth Imam is to annihilate two countries -- Israel, which they called the "Little Satan"; and the United States, which they call the "Great Satan." Now, I've put up a number of quotes directly by Khamenei and Ahmadinejad on my blog today at www.joelrosenberg.com so people can see that they are being clear.
- Hannity: What about the recent rift that is being reported between the two. Do you believe it?
- Rosenberg: Yes, I believe it. But you know you have political squabbles between leaders all the time. What unites them is this End Times theology. Now, in the end Khamenei is much more powerful than Ahmadinejad, so you could see a scenario where he removes Ahmadinejad. But look, he didn't in 2009 when he had the chance to rig the elections.
- Hannity: Does Khamenei think the Twelfth Imam is here?
- Rosenberg: It's interesting. We are not clear about that, but last summer he said he had met personally with the Twelfth Imam. Now, in my novel, I have a scenario like that where where he has a sort of dream of the Twelfth Imam. But this may have been different. He may be claiming that he had a personal meeting with someone that is here and emerging and is ready to go public. He did say in July of last year that he is the official representative of the Twelfth Imam on earth, which tells us one specific thing. It tells us not that this End Times theology is true. I'm an evangelical Christian. I don't believe its true. But they believe it. And if

they believe it, and they get the weapons to fulfill their apocalyptic genocidal nightmare scenario, they will take it. And we have to stop Iran prior to them acquiring these weapons or we are going to face a nightmare scenario of biblical proportions.

Hannity: Biblically speaking they talk a lot about End Times. You'll hear about "wars and rumors of wars" and earthquakes and diverse places and that kind of stuff. Since the Apostles walked the earth they thought we were in the End Times. But that hour nobody knows but the Father. I've only got about 20 seconds....

Rosenberg: That's exactly right. I'm an evangelical Christian and I believe we are living in the "last days," according to the Scriptures. The difference is the Iranian [leadership] believes you are supposed to kill tens of millions of people to bring about the Messiah. Jesus told us to share the Gospel and try to save and tens of millions of people and then He would come and that's the difference we face.

Hannity: I gotta run, and we are friends, and I don't want you to take this the wrong way, but your novels scare the crap out of me! You know that? I can't put them down when I start reading them. So Joel Rosenberg, his new book out Monday, *The Tehran Initiative*. Joel, thanks being with us, I appreciate it.

Rosenberg: Thank you, Sean.