

• WAR

OUR MAN ON AFGHANISTAN

Local Middle East expert Daniel Pipes explains what radical Muslim groups really want

The second plane hadn't even hit the World Trade Center, and already reporters were calling Daniel Pipes. It was only the beginning for the 52-year-old, mild-mannered Middle East expert with his own think tank, the Middle

DANIEL PIPES: Militant Islam, or Islamism, is the turning of Islam into an ideology. It is a radical utopian ideology in the tradition of fascism and Marxist Leninism. It sees us in the West as the single greatest obstacle to the achievement of its goals.

PM: You really believe that the goal of Islamic fundamentalists is to "Islamicize" the United States?

DP: The President said the same thing in his speech before Congress. He didn't say "America," but he said they wanted to change the world.

PM: Of all the things you say, that's probably the hardest for people to accept.

DP: It's logical, because in the view of militant Muslims, we are the single greatest obstacle. So, then, you have to remove this obstacle. One way is by an assault from the outside, such as we saw in September. The other, and the more dangerous way, is a legal approach, which tries to change the country from within, by changing the law, the ways people speak, by converting people.

PM: Is that seen by radical Muslims as an obtainable goal?

DP: It is real in the sense that Muslims now make up between one and two percent

of the [U.S.] population, and that's growing by leaps and bounds. To put it in different terms, in 1965 there may have been 100,000 Muslims in America, and now there are seven million. I don't think it's going to happen, but militant Muslims see it as a real and important goal. Also, remember, the leadership was forged in Afghanistan. And there they had the experience of defeating the Soviets. They have concluded from that—basically, one superpower down, and one to go. However unreal it might seem to us, it is real to them, and a mad dream can

have real consequences.

PM: Do any of these groups have a major presence in Philadelphia?

DP: No.

PM: Given the location of previous targets, do Philadelphians need to worry about future attacks?

DP: We should worry, especially with germ warfare. We need to be vigilant.

PM: But you have written that you feel safer now than you did before the attacks.

DP: I was more worried when no one was paying attention. I am less worried now that people *are* paying attention.



East Forum, on Walnut Street. Since the attack, he's been quoted or published in dozens of newspapers across the world and served as a talking head on CNN, CNBC and the Fox News Channel. It hasn't always been so easy for Pipes to gain a hearing for his controversial views on the Middle East and Islamic militancy. For years, no one seemed to give much credence to his pronouncements about a growing Islamic threat operating within the United States. The goal of militant Muslims, he had long warned, is not only to change America's foreign policy, but to "Islamicize" the entire country. —*Ami Eden*
PHILADELPHIA MAGAZINE: What is militant Islam?

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