

November 27, 2013

**Streetwise Professor** posts on leaks from the intelligence communities that highlight mistakes made by the administration in the Syrian debacle. Good timing since the "smart diplomats" are on to their Iranian adventure.

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*Regardless, it is a uniformly depressing story. But it can teach some lessons. The most obvious of these is that the Russians will say anything to advance their interests, even if that something is 180 degrees from the facts. Keep that in mind in events involving Syria in the future. And also keep it in mind when you read anything the Russians say about Iran.*

*And keep in mind this administrations fecklessness and cluelessness when evaluating any deal it reaches with Iran. Combine this with the fact that the Russians will run interference for Iran, just as they did with Syria, and the overwhelming odds are that no deal is far better than any deal Obama is likely to strike.*

More from **Victor Davis Hanson**.

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**John Bolton**, former US ambassador to the UN, provides analysis.

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*Third, Iran has broken the psychological momentum and effect of the international economic sanctions. While estimates differ on Iran's precise gain, it is considerable (\$7 billion is the lowest estimate), and presages much more. Tehran correctly assessed that a mere six-months' easing of sanctions will make it extraordinarily hard for the West to reverse direction, even faced with systematic violations of Iran's nuclear pledges. Major oil-importing countries (China, India, South Korea, and others) were already chafing under U.S. sanctions, sensing President Obama had no stomach either to impose sanctions on them, or pay the domestic political price of granting further waivers.*

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*Buying time for its own sake makes sense in some negotiating contexts, but the sub silentio objective here was to jerry-rig yet another argument to wield against Israel and its fateful decision whether or not to strike Iran. Obama, fearing that strike more than an Iranian nuclear weapon, clearly needed greater international pressure on Jerusalem. And Jerusalem fully understands that Israel was the real target of the Geneva negotiations. How, therefore, should Israel react? ...*

More criticism from **Jonathan Tobin**.

*... Instead of avoiding war, what Kerry has done is to set in motion a chain of events that may actually make armed conflict more likely. It's not just that Israel must now come to terms with the fact that it has been abandoned and betrayed by its American ally and must consider whether it must strike Iran's nuclear facilities before it is too late. Saudi Arabia must now also consider whether it has no choice but to buy a bomb (likely from Pakistan) to defend its existence against a deadly rival across the Persian Gulf. The Western stamp of approval on Iran will also embolden its Hezbollah terrorist auxiliaries and make it even less likely that Tehran's ally Bashar Assad will be toppled in Syria.*

*By deciding that the U.S. was too weak to stand up to Iranian demands, Obama and Kerry have put the Islamist regime in a position where it can throw its weight around in the region without any fear of U.S. retaliation.*

*The choice here was not between war with Iran or a weak deal. It was between the U.S. using all its economic power and diplomatic influence to make sure that Iran had to give up its nuclear program and a policy of appeasement aimed at allowing the president to retreat from his promises. The Middle East and the rest of the world may wind up paying a terrible price for Obama's false choices.*

**Bret Stephens** says it is worse than Munich.

*To adapt Churchill : Never in the field of global diplomacy has so much been given away by so many for so little.*

*Britain and France's capitulation to Nazi Germany at Munich has long been a byword for ignominy, moral and diplomatic. Yet neither Neville Chamberlain nor Édouard Daladier had the public support or military wherewithal to stand up to Hitler in September 1938. Britain had just 384,000 men in its regular army; the first Spitfire aircraft only entered RAF service that summer. "Peace for our time" it was not, but at least appeasement bought the West a year to rearm.*

*The signing of the Paris Peace Accords in January 1973 was a betrayal of an embattled U.S. ally and the abandonment of an effort for which 58,000 American troops gave their lives. Yet it did end America's participation in a peripheral war, which neither Congress nor the public could indefinitely support. "Peace with honor" it was not, as the victims of Cambodia's Killing Fields or Vietnam's re-education camps can attest. But, for American purposes at least, it was peace.*

*By contrast, the interim nuclear agreement signed in Geneva on Sunday by Iran and the six big powers has many of the flaws of Munich and Paris. But it has none of their redeeming or exculpating aspects. ...*

And **Roger Simon** sums up by saying "Iran will not have a nuclear bomb. Period." Sorry for the corny title of this article — I was going to call it "It's the Centrifuges, Stupid!" — but as a Hollywood movie executive famously said in a script meeting, "Obviousness is your friend." He was right about screenplays and he's right here. No one believes Barack Obama about anything anymore. Why should they? The new Iran deal is Obamacare II, only worse, a thousand megatons worse. ...

*... This is the desperate move of a president in free fall, only it's a move being made with millions of lives at stake. If the sanctions in place brought Iran to the table, why wouldn't ratcheting up the sanctions, as Congress sought to do, get Iran actually to agree to dismantle its program, to shrink back the extraordinary number of centrifuges we know them to have, a number vastly higher than any peaceful nation could possibly need?*

*Now we will never know.*

*So we have left it all to Israel and, incredible as it may seem, Saudi Arabia to put a stop to this madness. What will they do? I wouldn't want to be them. It's no fun at all Perhaps a new prayer should be added to the Jewish liturgy. "Thank G-d I wasn't born Benjamin Netanyahu."*



## Streetwise Professor

### Syria: Russian Cynicism, American Fecklessness.

by Craig Pirrong

[The Wall Street Journal's story about Syria's 21 August chemical weapons attack details the regime's ruthlessness and American fecklessness.](#) It also makes it plain that The Russians lied repeatedly on Assad's behalf in the aftermath. For the Russians (and the Iranians) were aware of it almost immediately, and called Assad on it\*:

Calls came in to the presidential palace from Syrian allies Russia and Iran, as well as from Hezbollah, the Lebanese militant group whose fighters were inadvertently caught up in the gassing, according to previously undisclosed intelligence gathered by U.S., European and Middle Eastern spy agencies. The callers told the Syrians that the attack was a blunder that could have profound international repercussions, U.S. officials say.

But recall the weeks after this. Lavrov and other officials repeatedly denied that the regime was behind the attacks. They supported Assad's claim that the attack was launched by the rebels. They cynically and shamelessly denied what they knew to be true and asserted what they knew to be false in order to protect their client.

Further recall that the Russians played this situation flawlessly, and achieved their aim: no American attack on Assad, Assad is in place and the tide is turning in his favor, and if anything the US is now a de facto supporter of the regime as its continued existence is necessary to carry out the elimination of its CW. All of this done with the assistance of Obama and Kerry, the only question being whether this assistance was witting, unwitting, or just dimwitted.

And the Russians know it. Indeed, they are pinching themselves over how easy it all was:

President Bashar al-Assad has tightened his hold on power. His regime has denied using chemical weapons, blaming the attacks on the rebels. In exchange for giving up his chemical arsenal, he avoided an American military intervention and likely will get even more support from Russia and Iran. Mr. Assad has pressed ahead with his offensive using conventional arms. *U.S. intercepts show a Russian official later boasting to a Syrian counterpart about how easy it had been to get the U.S. to back off strike plans, officials briefed on the intelligence say.*

The story is based on accounts of US intelligence intercepts provided by government officials. And that is interesting in itself.

Unlike many intelligence leaks (e.g., the Osama raid, Stuxnet, the junk bomber) these are not calculated to make Obama and the administration look good, to portray them as aggressively and cleverly attacking America's enemies. To the contrary, they are uniformly damning. Not just the revelation that the Russians think that Obama was (and is) an easily played chump. But the revelations that the US had observed previous CW attacks. That they observed the build up to this one, but didn't react because they thought it was just going to be another "minor" attack like the earlier ones: apparently none of these met the Obama "whole bunch" test. The revelations that the US was slow in responding in part because the intercepts had not been translated.

Which raises the question: who is leaking this damning information, and why? Is this the Intelligence Community's payback for Obama throwing them under the bus over Snowden (which I noted and predicted in the aftermath of the Merkel cellphone kerfuffle)? Or the consequence of the internecine battles over foreign policy in this administration?

Regardless, it is a uniformly depressing story. But it can teach some lessons. The most obvious of these is that the Russians will say anything to advance their interests, even if that something is 180 degrees from the facts. Keep that in mind in events involving Syria in the future. And also keep it in mind when you read anything the Russians say about Iran.

And keep in mind this administration's fecklessness and cluelessness when evaluating any deal it reaches with Iran. Combine this with the fact that the Russians will run interference for Iran, just as they did with Syria, and the overwhelming odds are that no deal is far better than any deal Obama is likely to strike.

\*Which means, OMG, we're spying on foreign leaders! Heaven forbid. What will the NSA do next?

## **The Corner**

### **Peace for Our Time**

by Victor Davis Hanson

The Iranian agreement comes not in isolation, unfortunately. The Syrian debacle instructed the Iranians that the Obama administration was more interested in announcing a peaceful breakthrough than actually achieving it. The timing is convenient for both sides: The Obama administration needed an offset abroad to the Obamacare disaster, and the Iranians want a breathing space to rebuild their finances and ensure that Assad can salvage the Iranian-Hezbollah-Assad axis. The agreement is a de facto acknowledgement that containing, not ending, Iran's nuclear program is now U.S. policy.

After all, to what degree would an Iranian freeze really retard development of a bomb, or simply put it on hold? In other words, has Iran already met some of its requirements for weaponization, and now simply wishes to take a breather, rebuild its economy, and strengthen its image in the West — before the final and rather easy development of a deliverable bomb? If the sanctions are not only lifted, but incentives are added in place of them, why then would Iran not agree to dismantle completely elements of its program that exceed domestic energy purposes? (Or for that matter, why would a nation with among the world's largest reserves of gas and oil feel the need to fund an expensive nuclear energy program in the first place?)

Aside from the details of this new Sword of Damocles pact, one wonders about the following: In the case of violations, will it be easier for Iran to return to weaponization or for the U.S. to reassemble allies to reestablish the sanctions? Will Israel now be more or less likely to consider preemption? Will the Sunni states feel some relief or more likely pursue avenues to achieve nuclear deterrence? Will allies like Japan or South Korea feel that the U.S. has reasserted its old global clout, or further worry that their patron might engage in secret talks with, say, China rather than reemphasize their security under the traditional U.S. umbrella?

The president's dismal polls are only a multiplier of that general perception abroad that foreign policy is an auxiliary to fundamental transformation at home, useful not so much to create international stability per se, as to enhance Obama influence in pursuing his domestic agenda. Collate reset, lead from behind, "redlines," "game-changers," "deadlines," the Arab Spring confusion, the skedaddle from Iraq, Benghazi, the Eastern European missile pullback, and the atmosphere is comparable to the 1979–80 Carter landscape, in which after three years of observation, the opportunists at last decided to act while the acting was good, from Afghanistan to Central America to Tehran.

There is not a good record, from Philip of Macedon to Hitler to Stalin in the 1940s to Carter and the Soviets in the 1970s to radical Islamists in the 1990s, of expecting authoritarians and thugs to listen to reason, cool their aggression, and appreciate democracies' sober and judicious appeal to logic — once they sense in the West greater eagerness to announce new, rather than to enforce old, agreements.

## **Weekly Standard**

### **Abject Surrender by the United States**

#### ***What does Israel do now?***

by John Bolton

Negotiations for an "interim" arrangement over Iran's nuclear weapons program finally succeeded this past weekend, as Security Council foreign ministers (plus Germany) flew to Geneva to meet their Iranian counterpart. After raising expectations of a deal by first convening on November 8-10, it would have been beyond humiliating to gather again without result. So agreement was struck despite solemn incantations earlier that "no deal is better than a bad deal."

This interim agreement is badly skewed from America's perspective. Iran retains its full capacity to enrich uranium, thus abandoning a decade of Western insistence and Security Council resolutions that Iran stop all uranium-enrichment activities. Allowing Iran to continue enriching, and despite modest (indeed, utterly inadequate) measures to prevent it from increasing its enriched-uranium stockpiles and its overall nuclear infrastructure, lays the predicate for Iran fully enjoying its "right" to enrichment in any "final" agreement. Indeed, the interim agreement itself acknowledges that a "comprehensive solution" will "involve a mutually defined enrichment program." This is not, as the Obama administration leaked before the deal became public, a "compromise" on Iran's claimed "right" to enrichment. This is abject surrender by the United States.

In exchange for superficial concessions, Iran achieved three critical breakthroughs. First, it bought time to continue all aspects of its nuclear-weapons program the agreement does not cover (centrifuge manufacturing and testing; weaponization research and fabrication; and its entire ballistic missile program). Indeed, given that the interim agreement contemplates periodic renewals, Iran may have gained all of the time it needs to achieve weaponization not of simply a handful of nuclear weapons, but of dozens or more.

Second, Iran has gained legitimacy. This central banker of international terrorism and flagrant nuclear proliferator is once again part of the international club. Much as the Syria chemical-

weapons agreement buttressed Bashar al-Assad, the mullahs have escaped the political deep freezer.

Third, Iran has broken the psychological momentum and effect of the international economic sanctions. While estimates differ on Iran's precise gain, it is considerable (\$7 billion is the lowest estimate), and presages much more. Tehran correctly assessed that a mere six-months' easing of sanctions will make it extraordinarily hard for the West to reverse direction, even faced with systematic violations of Iran's nuclear pledges. Major oil-importing countries (China, India, South Korea, and others) were already chafing under U.S. sanctions, sensing President Obama had no stomach either to impose sanctions on them, or pay the domestic political price of granting further waivers.

Benjamin Netanyahu's earlier warning that this was "the deal of the century" for Iran has unfortunately been vindicated. Given such an inadequate deal, what motivated Obama to agree? The inescapable conclusion is that, the mantra notwithstanding, the White House actually did prefer a bad deal to the diplomatic process grinding to a halt. This deal was a "hail Mary" to buy time. Why?

Buying time for its own sake makes sense in some negotiating contexts, but the *sub silentio* objective here was to jerry-rig yet another argument to wield against Israel and its fateful decision whether or not to strike Iran. Obama, fearing that strike more than an Iranian nuclear weapon, clearly needed greater international pressure on Jerusalem. And Jerusalem fully understands that Israel was the real target of the Geneva negotiations. How, therefore, should Israel react?

Most importantly, the deal leaves the basic strategic realities unchanged. Iran's nuclear program was, from its inception, a weapons program, and it remains one today. Even modest constraints, easily and rapidly reversible, do not change that fundamental political and operational reality. And while some already-known aspects of Iran's nuclear program are returned to enhanced scrutiny, the undeclared and likely unknown military work will continue to expand, thus recalling the drunk looking for his lost car keys under the street lamp because of the better lighting.

Moreover, the international climate of opinion against a strike will only harden during the next six months. Capitalizing on the deal, Iran's best strategy is to accelerate the apparent pace of rapprochement with the all-too-eager West. The further and faster Iran can move, still making only superficial, easily reversible concessions in exchange for dismantling the sanctions regime, the greater the international pressure against Israel using military force. Iran will not suddenly, Ahmadinejad-style, openly defy Washington or Jerusalem and trumpet cheating and violations. Instead, Tehran will go to extraordinary lengths to conceal its activities, working for example in new or unknown facilities and with North Korea, or shaving its compliance around the edges. The more time that passes, the harder it will be for Israel to deliver a blow that substantially retards the Iranian program.

Undoubtedly, an Israeli strike during the interim deal would be greeted with outrage from all the expected circles. But that same outrage, or more, would also come further down the road. In short, measured against the expected reaction even in friendly capitals, there is never a "good" time for an Israeli strike, only bad and worse times. Accordingly, the Geneva deal does not change Israel's strategic calculus even slightly, unless the Netanyahu government itself falls prey to the psychological warfare successfully waged so far by the ayatollahs. That we will know only as the days unfold.

Israel still must make the extremely difficult judgment whether it will stand by as Iran maneuvers effortlessly around a feckless and weak White House, bolstering its economic situation while still making progress on the nuclear front, perhaps less progress on some aspects of its nuclear work than before the deal, but more on others.

And what can critics of the Geneva deal, in Washington and other Western capitals, do? They can try to advance the sanctions legislation pending in the Senate over administration objections, for the political symbolism if nothing else. Unfortunately, they're unlikely to succeed over the administration's near-certain opposition. Tehran judges correctly that they have Obama obediently moving in their direction, with the European Union straining at the bit for still-more relaxation of the sanctions regimes.

Instead, those opposing Obama's "Munich moment" in Geneva (to borrow a Kerry phrase from the Syrian crisis), should focus on the larger and more permanent strategic problem: A terrorist, nuclear Iran still threatens American interests and allies, and almost certainly means widespread nuclear proliferation across the Middle East. A nuclear Iran would also be essentially invulnerable, providing a refuge that al Qaeda leaders hiding in Afghan and Pakistani caves could only dream of.

So in truth, an Israeli military strike is the only way to avoid Tehran's otherwise inevitable march to nuclear weapons, and the proliferation that will surely follow. Making the case for Israel's exercise of its legitimate right of self-defense has therefore never been more politically important. Whether they are celebrating in Tehran or in Jerusalem a year from now may well depend on how the opponents of the deal in Washington conduct themselves.

*John Bolton, a senior fellow at the American Enterprise Institute, served as U.S. ambassador to the United Nations in 2005-06.*

## Contentions

### [Was There An Alternative to the Iran Deal?](#)

by Jonathan S. Tobin

As [I wrote earlier this morning](#), the deal that President Obama has struck with Iran has very little chance of actually stopping them from reaching their nuclear goal. Their centrifuges remain intact and will, at best, delay them from "breaking out" to full nuclear capability by a few weeks. It will reward them for a decade of lies and deceptions and effectively normalize a rogue regime that continues to sponsor international terrorism and spew anti-Semitism while also starting the process of unraveling sanctions. But to all this Secretary of State John Kerry has what he thinks is a devastating answer: what's the alternative?

The point of this question is to not-so-subtly imply that the only other choice was a war that no one wants. But this favorite rhetorical device of the president's in which he poses false choices is a deception. There was an alternative to surrendering to Iran's diplomatic demands that we effectively recognize their "right" to enrich uranium and scrapping the president's campaign promise that his goal was to force it give up its nuclear program—and it didn't mean war. All it required was for him to tighten sanctions and enforce them to the point where Iran's elites,



rather than the common people, started to feel the economic pain. But by wasting five years during which he opposed sanctions, stalled on their enforcement and then started to scale them back at the first hint of an Iranian willingness to negotiate, the president has discarded all of America's leverage.

Kerry's assumption and that of others who advocated appeasement of Iran is based on the idea that it was not reasonable or realistic for the West to demand that Iran dismantle its nuclear program as the president demanded in his foreign-policy debate with Mitt Romney last year. They say that asking for the dismantling of the centrifuges that will continue to spin and enrich uranium even after the president's deal is in place was just too much, as was the demand that the nuclear facilities that are openly discussed and covered in the deal (as opposed to the secret underground Iranian nuclear facilities that even [the New York Times concedes](#) that the CIA, the Europeans, and the Israelis believe exist) be decommissioned or that its stockpile of enriched uranium be shipped out of the country.

Why were these demands unrealistic? Because the Iranians said they were.

That's it. The entire foundation of this agreement isn't a matter of what was technically feasible or even a belief that the sanctions weren't working or couldn't be tightened to the point where the Iranian economy could collapse. Everyone knows that the sanctions are hurting, but if Iran's oil trade was subjected to a complete embargo (as a third round of sanctions that Congress was considering would have done), Tehran could have been brought to its knees.

If the Iranians had been pushed harder and sooner and had they believed that there was a credible threat of force on the table from the United States, which was clearly not the case, they might have been convinced that they had no alternative but to give up their nukes. But for five years, President Obama has been signaling not only that they needn't fear him but also that he was willing to settle for far less than the demands he had been making in public. We don't know for how long the administration has been conducting the secret diplomatic talks with Iran or whether they were run by Obama consigliere Valerie Jarrett. But it's apparent that Washington's assumption that it couldn't make the ayatollahs give up their nuclear toys was a self-fulfilling prophecy. By refusing to push them harder and by showing their willingness to accept far less than the minimum that would have ensured that a weapon was not possible, they gave the Iranians the confidence to stick to their positions in the talks.

So what Kerry and other administration apologists are doing is turning the question of alternatives on its head. Instead of falsely implying that the only alternative to appeasement was war, he should be called to account for not exploring all the diplomatic and economic options that could have brought about a far more satisfactory result than the weak deal he signed.

In exchange for superficial and easily reversed nuclear concessions, Obama and Kerry have normalized Iran and begun the process of unraveling sanctions. The alternative to this was an American foreign policy that was determined to make it clear to Iran that they would have to give up their nuclear program in the same manner than Libya was forced not to do and they would not be given the chance to take the North Korean route to nuclear capability.

Instead of avoiding war, what Kerry has done is to set in motion a chain of events that may actually make armed conflict more likely. It's not just that Israel must now come to terms with the fact that it has been abandoned and betrayed by its American ally and must consider whether it

must strike Iran's nuclear facilities before it is too late. Saudi Arabia must now also consider whether it has no choice but to buy a bomb (likely from Pakistan) to defend its existence against a deadly rival across the Persian Gulf. The Western stamp of approval on Iran will also embolden its Hezbollah terrorist auxiliaries and make it even less likely that Tehran's ally Bashar Assad will be toppled in Syria.

By deciding that the U.S. was too weak to stand up to Iranian demands, Obama and Kerry have put the Islamist regime in a position where it can throw its weight around in the region without any fear of U.S. retaliation.

The choice here was not between war with Iran or a weak deal. It was between the U.S. using all its economic power and diplomatic influence to make sure that Iran had to give up its nuclear program and a policy of appeasement aimed at allowing the president to retreat from his promises. The Middle East and the rest of the world may wind up paying a terrible price for Obama's false choices.

**WSJ**

### **Worse Than Munich**

***In 1938, Chamberlain bought time to rearm. In 2013, Obama gives Iran time to go nuclear.***

by Bret Stephens

To adapt Churchill : Never in the field of global diplomacy has so much been given away by so many for so little.

Britain and France's capitulation to Nazi Germany at Munich has long been a byword for ignominy, moral and diplomatic. Yet neither Neville Chamberlain nor Édouard Daladier had the public support or military wherewithal to stand up to Hitler in September 1938. Britain had just 384,000 men in its regular army; the first Spitfire aircraft only entered RAF service that summer. "Peace for our time" it was not, but at least appeasement bought the West a year to rearm.

The signing of the Paris Peace Accords in January 1973 was a betrayal of an embattled U.S. ally and the abandonment of an effort for which 58,000 American troops gave their lives. Yet it did end America's participation in a peripheral war, which neither Congress nor the public could indefinitely support. "Peace with honor" it was not, as the victims of Cambodia's Killing Fields or Vietnam's re-education camps can attest. But, for American purposes at least, it was peace.

By contrast, the interim nuclear agreement signed in Geneva on Sunday by Iran and the six big powers has many of the flaws of Munich and Paris. But it has none of their redeeming or exculpating aspects.



*Neville Chamberlain after Munich*



*Our Fool*

Consider: Britain and France came to Munich as military weaklings. The U.S. and its allies face Iran from a position of overwhelming strength. Britain and France won time to rearm. The U.S. and its allies have given Iran more time to stockpile uranium and develop its nuclear infrastructure. Britain and France had overwhelming domestic constituencies in favor of any deal that would avoid war. The [Obama](#) administration is defying broad bipartisan majorities in both houses of Congress for the sake of a deal.

As for the Vietnam parallels, the U.S. showed military resolve in the run-up to the Paris Accords with a massive bombing and mining campaign of the North that demonstrated presidential resolve and forced Hanoi to sign the deal. The administration comes to Geneva fresh from worming its way out of its own threat to use force to punish Syria's Bashar Assad for his use of chemical weapons against his own people.

The Nixon administration also exited Vietnam in the context of a durable opening to Beijing that helped tilt the global balance of power against Moscow. Now the U.S. is attempting a fleeting opening with Tehran at the expense of a durable alliance of values with Israel and interests with Saudi Arabia. "How to Lose Friends and Alienate People" is the title of a hilarious memoir by British author Toby Young—but it could equally be the history of Barack Obama's foreign policy.

That's where the differences end between Geneva and the previous accords. What they have in common is that each deal was a betrayal of small countries—Czechoslovakia, South Vietnam, Israel—that had relied on Western security guarantees. Each was a victory for the dictatorships: "No matter the world wants it or not," Iranian President Hasan Rouhani said Sunday, "this path will, God willingly, continue to the peak that has been considered by the martyred nuclear scientists." Each deal increased the contempt of the dictatorships for the democracies: "If ever that silly old man comes interfering here again with his umbrella," Hitler is reported to have said of Chamberlain after Munich, "I'll kick him downstairs and jump on his stomach."

And each deal was a prelude to worse. After Munich came the conquest of Czechoslovakia, the Nazi-Soviet pact and World War II. After Paris came the fall of Saigon and Phnom Penh and the humiliating exit from the embassy rooftop. After Geneva there will come a new, chaotic Mideast reality in which the United States will lose leverage over enemies and friends alike.

What will that look like? Iran will gradually shake free of sanctions and glide into a zone of nuclear ambiguity that will keep its adversaries guessing until it opts to make its capabilities known. Saudi Arabia will move swiftly to acquire a nuclear deterrent from its clients in Islamabad; Saudi billionaire Prince Alwaleed bin Talal made that clear to the Journal last week when he indiscreetly discussed "the arrangement with Pakistan." Egypt is beginning to ponder a nuclear option of its own while drawing closer to a security alliance with Russia.

As for Israel, it cannot afford to live in a neighborhood where Iran becomes nuclear, Assad remains in power, and Hezbollah—Israel's most immediate military threat—gains strength, clout and battlefield experience. The chances that Israel will hazard a strike on Iran's nuclear sites greatly increased since Geneva. More so the chances of another war with Hezbollah.

After World War II the U.S. created a global system of security alliances to prevent the kind of foreign policy freelancing that is again becoming rampant in the Middle East. It worked until President Obama decided in his wisdom to throw it away. If you hear echoes of the 1930s in the capitulation at Geneva, it's because the West is being led by the same sort of men, minus the umbrellas.

**Roger L. Simon**

**[Iran Will Not Have an Atomic Bomb. Period.](#)**



Sorry for the corny title of this article — I was going to call it “It’s the Centrifuges, Stupid!” — but as a Hollywood movie executive famously said in a script meeting, “Obviousness is your friend.” He was right about screenplays and he’s right here. No one believes Barack Obama about anything anymore. Why should they? The new Iran deal is Obamacare II, only worse, a thousand megatons worse.

So many things are wrong with the agreement coming out of Geneva, it’s hard to know where to begin (for an excellent overall go to The Israel Project’s [Tower](#) website or look right here with our resident expert [Dr. Ledeen](#)), but the most egregious part indeed comes down to centrifuges. Iran has some 19,000 of them — more than three times the amount of longtime nuclear-armed Pakistan. The agreement forbids the Iranians to build anymore, but, much more importantly, it *allows* the Iranians to *fix* any of their centrifuges that may be broken and get them working again..

How many of those 19,000 are broken? I’m not sure anyone outside Iran knows, but as will be recalled, the Stuxnet computer virus of 2010 was designed to bring these centrifuges to a halt and apparently did so quite successfully in many cases. But now — thanks to the deal that Obama and Kerry have put together — the Iranians will have six unmolested months to get as many of them up and running as they can, enriching uranium.

Speaking of which, Iran’s “right to enrich” is supposedly still under dispute, the Americans saying one thing about the language in the deal and the Iranians another. Some dispute. The prologue to the “interim” agreement states that the *amount* of enrichment will be decided in future negotiation, not (*nota bene*) *whether* enrichment will be allowed or not. (The specific language reads: “a mutually defined enrichment program with practical limits and transparency measures to ensure the peaceful nature of the program.” Uh-huh.) Meanwhile, Iran is able to enrich up to five percent, not the previous alleged maximum of 3.5%. Whatever happened to that other 1/5%? Confusing, no? Oh, well, that’s a long way from the 20% needed for weaponization.

No, it’s not. It’s not very much at all when you have 19,000 centrifuges. How much of a setback for the Iranian nuclear weapons program is this five percent permissible level then? According to the *New York Times*, about as pro-Obama a publication as you can get outside of a Chicago Democratic Party newsletter, the current agreement will retard the Iranian program only about one month.

One month? For this we give them oodles of desperately needed cash — seven billion on the face of it but some suggest that’s floating up to twenty — not to mention ending sanctions on such things as auto parts. This is great for Ayatollah Khamenei who, we have learned recently, owns the BMW distributorship in Iran.

Nevertheless, we are told by such wise men as Brent Scowcroft and Zbigniew Kazimierz Brzezinski that this is a good deal and we should jump at it. More specifically, these realists attest, this is the best deal we can get now.

Really? The Iranians came to the table because of sanctions. We are now lifting them and, simultaneously, encouraging others to think proactively about doing business with Iran, a potential gold (or oil) mine. We are also ratifying the hellacious Islamic regime of the mullahs that oppresses women, murders homosexuals and imprisons and tortures all those who oppose

it. Forget human rights. What are they? America (really Obama in this instance) just wants a deal.

It's not surprising. Obama never did anything for the Green Movement. Why should he care now, especially with his post-Obamacare numbers imploding? Anything to move the ball and distract the news cycle. So what if Ayatollah Khamenei called Israel a "[rabid dog](#)" about three days ago while the throng before him yelled "Death to America" and "Death to Israel"? It's just a little hyperbole, right? He's not serious. This isn't Munich. This is a respectful negotiation between peers.

"No, it's not," I repeat, again obviously. This is the desperate move of a president in free fall, only it's a move being made with millions of lives at stake. If the sanctions in place brought Iran to the table, why wouldn't ratcheting up the sanctions, as Congress sought to do, get Iran actually to agree to dismantle its program, to shrink back the extraordinary number of centrifuges we know them to have, a number vastly higher than any peaceful nation could possibly need?

Now we will never know.

So we have left it all to Israel and, incredible as it may seem, Saudi Arabia to put a stop to this madness. What will they do? I wouldn't want to be them. It's no fun at all Perhaps a new prayer should be added to the Jewish liturgy. "Thank G-d I wasn't born Benjamin Netanyahu."

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#### HOW OBAMA SCORED THE THE IRAN NUKE DEAL





The DEVIL IS IN THE DETAILS



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*A Very, Very Bad Deal*

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**GREAT NEWS!...**

IRAN SAYS THIS DEAL WILL HELP **BRIDGE** OUR DIFFERENCES.







