

August 10, 2015

We have had a nice few days without contemplating the detritus of the current occupant. Events intrude though, and we need to pay attention to his calumnies that those who oppose his agreement with Iran are those who want war, and they are allied with hard-liners in Iran who shout, "death to America." John Hinderaker of Power Line posts on the president's "lowest moment yet."

Today President Obama gave a speech at American University, urging acceptance of his nuclear deal with Iran. It was the usual exercise in deception and demagoguery, and he skated up to the edge of accusing opponents of the deal—a majority of Americans, apparently—of treason.

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"After two years of negotiations, we have achieved a detailed arrangement that permanently prohibits Iran from obtaining a nuclear weapon."

The "prohibition" consists of a pious declaration by Iran which it can repudiate at any time. The agreement contains no provisions that will permanently impede Iran's ability to acquire nuclear weapons. The provisions that (if adhered to) would materially impede Iran's nuclear weapons program expire in no more than 15 years.

Next, the president offered up a revisionist history of the war in Iraq—a topic of dubious relevance at best:

[M]any of the same people who argued for the war in Iraq are now making the case against the Iran nuclear deal.

Whereas others who argued for the war in Iraq are now making the case in favor of the Iran deal—Joe Biden, John Kerry and Hillary Clinton, for example. So what? Next comes a breathtaking series of lies:

"I said that America didn't just have to end that war — we had to end the mindset that got us there in the first place. It was a mindset characterized by a preference for military action over diplomacy; a mindset that put a premium on unilateral U.S. action over the painstaking work of building international consensus; a mindset that exaggerated threats beyond what the intelligence supported."

No American administration has ever preferred war to diplomacy. The war in Iraq was anything but unilateral, as more than 20 countries participated in the U.S.-led coalition. And the intelligence on Iraq's WMDs was not exaggerated, as we know from the now-public October 2002 National Intelligence Estimate. (Nor, as we now know, was that intelligence entirely wrong.) ...

... If Obama had said that the Republican caucus is making common cause with Iran's hardliners, it would have been an unambiguous accusation of treason. By phrasing it the other way around—the hardliners are making common cause with Republicans—Obama gives himself a slight margin of deniability. But either way, it is a disgusting slander.

It is also delusional. Iran's hardliners are the regime in power. The mullahs are not aligning themselves with Republicans; on the contrary, they are trumpeting the fact that they got everything they wanted in their negotiations with John Kerry and Barack Obama. But Obama can't, and won't, confront that reality. He will just go on slandering his political opponents and lying to the American people.

Barack Obama is a terrible president, but he is a worse man.

Charles Krauthammer devoted his weekly column to the controversy.

... It is only because so many Democrats are defecting that Obama gave the AU speech in the first place. And why he tried so mightily to turn the argument into a partisan issue — those warmongering Republicans attacking a president offering peace in our time. Obama stooped low, accusing the Republican caucus of making “common cause” with the Iranian “hard-liners” who shout “Death to America.”

Forget the gutter ad hominem. This is delusional. Does Obama really believe the Death-to-America hard-liners are some kind of KKK fringe? They are the government, for God's sake — the entire state apparatus of the Islamic Republic from the Revolutionary Guards to the supreme leader Ayatollah Khamenei who for decades have propagated, encouraged and applauded those very same “Death to America” chants.

Common cause with the Iranian hard-liners? Who more than Obama? For years, they conduct a rogue nuclear weapons program in defiance of multiple Security Council declarations of its illegality backed by sanctions and embargoes. Obama rewards them with a treaty that legitimates their entire nuclear program, lifts the embargo on conventional weapons and ballistic missiles and revives an economy — described by Iran's president as headed back to “the Stone Age” under sanctions — with an injection of up to \$150 billion in unfrozen assets, permission for the unlimited selling of oil and full access to the international financial system.

With this agreement, this repressive, intolerant, aggressive, supremely anti-American regime — the chief exporter of terror in the world — is stronger and more entrenched than it has ever been.

Common cause, indeed.

Even **David Brooks** sees the agreement's problems.

... Many members of Congress will be tempted to accept the terms of our partial surrender as the least bad option in the wake of our defeat. I get that. But in voting for this deal they may be affixing their names to an arrangement that will increase the chance of more comprehensive war further down the road.

Iran is a fanatical, hegemonic, hate-filled regime. If you think its radicalism is going to be softened by a few global trade opportunities, you really haven't been paying attention to the Middle East over the past four decades.

Iran will use its \$150 billion windfall to spread terror around the region and exert its power. It will incrementally but dangerously cheat on the accord. Armed with money, ballistic weapons and an eventual nuclear breakout, it will become more aggressive. As the end of the nuclear delay comes into view, the 45th or 46th president will decide that action must be taken.

Economic and political defeats can be as bad as military ones. Sometimes when you surrender to a tyranny you lay the groundwork for a more cataclysmic conflict to come.

Andrew Malcolm calls him the very good talker. **Paul Greenberg** wonders why this great glib talker has nothing to say about the videos of Planned Parenthood selling parts. All we hear is crickets.

Silence comes in many varieties. It can be golden. Or just silence. Like the white space between the words on this page.

There is the silence that sounds like a confession, even if it isn't. ("On counsel's advice, I invoke my right under the Fifth Amendment not to answer, on the grounds I may incriminate myself.")

There is the silence of the perjurer as he weighs every word in an attempt to devise an escape clause. "To the best of my recollection..." as Alger Hiss used to say before trying to refute Whittaker Chambers' irrefutable testimony about Soviet espionage in the State Department.

There is the silence of prudence personified by Silent Cal (Coolidge), who never uttered an unnecessary word. As opposed to the witness who chooses to brazen it out ("I did not have sexual relations with that woman") but only digs himself into a deeper hole. And then has to take refuge in semantic games. ("It depends upon what the meaning of the word 'is' is.")

Then there is the silence of an ordinarily glib politician who suddenly has nothing to say about an event in the news. As when the Hon. Barack Obama has no comment about those revealing videos featuring doctors with Planned Parenthood, who are caught talking about the fetal parts they're selling. The rest of the country may be repelled by those tapes, but our president remains ... silent. ...

Jason Riley writes on how the president has created racial discord.

One great irony of the current presidency is that Barack Obama won the support of so many seasoned political journalists—not to mention otherwise-skeptical voters—who thought that a black president would improve racial unity. David Remnick of the New Yorker called him "the bridge." Time magazine's Joe Klein assured readers that Mr. Obama, who "transcends the racial divide so effortlessly," would help America turn the page on race. But six years in, that hasn't happened.

According to a CBS News/New York Times poll in July, nearly 60% of Americans, including large majorities of both blacks and whites, say race relations "are generally bad." Almost 40% say they are getting worse. Other surveys back those findings. CNN pollsters reported in March that the share of people who think race relations have improved on Mr. Obama's watch had fallen to 15% this year from 32% in 2009, while the share who think relations have worsened

grew to 39% from 6%. A Gallup survey in January reported that 62% of respondents are “somewhat dissatisfied” or “very dissatisfied” with the state of race relations in the country, versus 40% in 2008.

The press has dutifully reported this racial retrogression but is reluctant to lay any blame on Mr. Obama. The president obviously isn't responsible for the racially charged incidents that have occurred on his watch, from Ferguson, Mo., to Baltimore, to Charleston, S.C. Still, he ought to be held accountable for the racial impact of his reactions, his policies and his political bedfellows.

Mr. Obama campaigned as a racial conciliator, someone who believed, as he said in a speech to the Democratic National Convention in 2004, that “there is not a black America and a white America and Latino America and Asian America. There's the United States of America.”

But that is not how he has governed. As president, he has repeatedly—and often prematurely—taken sides in local police matters involving black suspects. ...

Victor Davis Hanson asks if Israel will "do the unthinkable to prevent the unimaginable."

The Obama administration seems peeved that almost everyone in Israel, left and right, has no use for the present Iranian–American deal to thwart Iran's efforts to get the bomb.

Indeed, at times John Kerry has hinted darkly that Israel's opposition to the pact might incur American wrath should the deal be tabled — even though Kerry knows that the polls show a clear majority of Americans being against the proposed agreement while remaining quite supportive of the Jewish state. President Obama, from time to time, suggests that his agreement is being sabotaged by nefarious lobbying groups, big-time check writers, and neoconservative supporters of the Iraq war — all shorthand, apparently, for pushy Jewish groups.

Obama and his negotiators seem surprised that Israelis take quite seriously Iranian leaders' taunts over the past 35 years that they would like to liquidate the Jewish state and everyone in it. The Israelis, for some reason, remember that well before Hitler came to power, he had bragged about the idea of killing Jews en masse in his sloppily composed autobiographical Mein Kampf. Few in Germany or abroad had taken the raving young Hitler too seriously. Even in the late 1930s, when German Jews were being rounded up and haphazardly killed on German streets by state-sanctioned thugs, most observers considered such activities merely periodic excesses or outbursts from non-governmental Black- and Brownshirts. ...

... The Israelis have taken to heart lots of lessons over the last 70 years. They have concluded that often the world quietly wants Israel to deal with existential threats emanating from the Middle East while loudly damning it when it does. They have learned from the experience of the Holocaust that, for good or evil, Jews are on their own and can never again trust in the world's professed humanity to prevent another Holocaust. And they are convinced that they can also never again err on the side of the probability that national leaders, with deadly weapons in their grasp, do not really mean all the unhinged things they shout and scream about killing Jews.

Given all that, we should conclude that any deal that leads, now or in the near future, to an Iranian bomb is unacceptable to Israel — a nation that will likely soon have no choice but to consider the unthinkable in order to prevent the unimaginable.

Good selection of cartoons today.

Power Line

Barack Obama's Lowest Moment Yet?

by John Hinderaker

Today President Obama gave a speech at American University, urging acceptance of his nuclear deal with Iran. It was the usual exercise in deception and demagoguery, and he skated up to the edge of accusing opponents of the deal—a majority of Americans, apparently—of treason.

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2002 National Intelligence Estimate. (Nor, as we now know, was that intelligence entirely wrong.)

Obama recites Iraq's recent history, but leaves out a key point:

Today, Iraq remains gripped by sectarian conflict, and the emergence of al Qaeda in Iraq has now evolved into ISIL. And ironically, the single greatest beneficiary in the region of that war was the Islamic Republic of Iran, which saw its strategic position strengthened by the removal of its long-standing enemy, Saddam Hussein.

Obama neglects to mention his own role: in 2011 he prematurely withdrew all American troops from Iraq, crowing that Iraq was then "sovereign, stable and self-reliant," a fact that Vice-President Joe Biden hailed as one of Obama's "great achievements." Iraq was sovereign and stable but not, as military leaders warned, entirely self-reliant. It was Obama's needless withdrawal of the last American troops that allowed Iraq to spiral toward chaos and permitted ISIS—the Islamic State in Syria—to move into Iraq. But Obama has never once in his life taken responsibility for anything.

Who is to blame for Iran's nuclear program? Why, President Bush, of course!

When the Bush administration took office, Iran had no centrifuges — the machines necessary to produce material for a bomb — that were spinning to enrich uranium. But despite repeated warnings from the United States government, by the time I took office, Iran had installed several thousand centrifuges....

[IAEA reports](#) indicate that Iran's Natanz facility had around 5,500 centrifuges when Obama took office, and over 15,000 by May 2015. With the Fordow facility, Iran now has around 19,000 centrifuges operating. But it's all Bush's fault!

As always, Obama misrepresented the terms of the agreement. These are issues we have written about many times, so I won't address those misrepresentations in detail. But here are a couple:

If Iran violates the agreement over the next decade, all of the sanctions can snap back into place. We won't need the support of other members of the U.N. Security Council; America can trigger snapback on our own.

Sheer fantasy. Much of the sanctions relief that Iran most craves can never be taken back—most notably, the \$100 billion to \$150 billion in frozen funds that will soon flow to Tehran. Further, all commercial deals that are entered into during the period of sanctions relief are excepted from future sanctions.

Even with those huge loopholes, the "snap back" is a fiction. Even U.S. sanctions will not "snap back" automatically; they will have to be reimposed by Congress and implemented over a period of time. We will have no control over whether the E.U. reimposes sanctions. The supposed "snap back" mechanism is limited to U.N. sanctions, and, as I wrote [here](#), it is doubtful whether paragraph 37 of the agreement, the purported snap back provision, would actually cause U.N. sanctions to be reimposed based on the vote of one member of the Security Council.

It is true that if Iran lives up to its commitments, it will gain access to roughly \$56 billion of its own money — revenue frozen overseas by other countries.

This is a very recent and highly dubious talking point. Until the last week or two, as I wrote [here](#), every source I am aware of has long estimated Iran's frozen assets at \$100 billion to \$150 billion. In fact, the Treasury Department, which John Kerry cited as the source for the administration's new number, pegged the frozen assets at "approximately \$100 billion" in sworn testimony before a Congressional committee in January of this year. And that is just a down payment on the economic benefit that Iran's mullahs will receive from the end of sanctions.

No doubt the worst portion of Obama's speech is the one that has gotten the most attention. Note how Obama walks right up to the line of accusing Republicans in Congress of treason:

Just because Iranian hardliners chant "Death to America" does not mean that that's what all Iranians believe. (Applause.)

No, but it is what Iran's rulers believe. Iran's Supreme Leader frequently leads mobs in chants of "Death to America." Does Obama think he is kidding?

In fact, it's those hardliners who are most comfortable with the status quo. It's those hardliners chanting "Death to America" who have been most opposed to the deal. They're making common cause with the Republican caucus. (Laughter and applause.)

If Obama had said that the Republican caucus is making common cause with Iran's hardliners, it would have been an unambiguous accusation of treason. By phrasing it the other way around—the hardliners are making common cause with Republicans—Obama gives himself a slight margin of deniability. But either way, it is a disgusting slander.

It is also delusional. Iran's hardliners are the regime in power. The mullahs are not aligning themselves with Republicans; on the contrary, they are trumpeting the fact that they got everything they wanted in their negotiations with John Kerry and Barack Obama. But Obama can't, and won't, confront that reality. He will just go on slandering his political opponents and lying to the American people.

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Washington Post

[Just who is helping Iran's hard-liners?](#)

by Charles Krauthammer

The latest Quinnipiac poll shows that [the American public rejects](#) the president's Iran deal by more than 2 to 1. This is astonishing. The public generally gives the president deference on major treaties. Just a few weeks ago, a majority supported the deal.

What happened? People learned what's in it.

And don't be fooled by polls that present, as fact, the administration's position *in the very question*. The Post/ABC poll [assures the respondent](#) that, for example, "international inspectors would monitor Iran's facilities, and if Iran is caught breaking the agreement economic sanctions would be imposed again. Do you support or oppose this agreement?"

Well, if you put it that way, sure. But it is precisely because these claims are so tendentious and misleading that public — and congressional — opinion is turning.

Inspections? Everyone now knows that “anytime, anywhere” — indispensable for a clandestine program in a country twice the size of Texas with a long history of hiding and cheating — [has been changed](#) to “You’ve got 24 days and then we’re coming in for a surprise visit.” New York restaurants, [observed Jackie Mason](#), get more intrusive inspections than the Iranian nuclear program.

Snapback sanctions? Everyone knows that once the international sanctions are lifted, they are never coming back. Moreover, consider the illogic of President Obama’s argument. The theme of [his American University speech](#) Wednesday was that the only alternative to what he brought back from Vienna is war because sanctions — even the more severe sanctions that Congress has been demanding — will never deter the Iranians. But if sanctions don’t work, how can you argue that the Iranians will now be deterred from cheating by the threat of ... sanctions?

Snapback sanctions, mind you, that will inevitably be weaker and more loophole-ridden than the existing ones.

And then came news of the [secret side agreements](#) between Iran and the International Atomic Energy Agency. These concern past nuclear activity and inspections of the [Parchin military facility](#) where Iran is suspected of having tested nuclear detonation devices.

We don’t know what’s in these side deals. And we will never know, says the administration. It’s “standard practice,” you see, for such IAEA agreements to remain secret.

Well, this treaty is not standard practice. It’s the most important treaty of our time. Yet, Congress is asked to ratify this “historic diplomatic breakthrough” (Obama) while being denied access to the heart of the inspection regime.

Congress doesn’t know what’s in these side agreements, but Iran does. And [just this past Monday](#), Ali Akbar Velayati, a top adviser to the supreme leader, declared that “entry into our military sites is absolutely forbidden.”

One secret side deal [could even allow](#) Iran to provide its own soil samples (!) from Parchin. And now [satellite imagery shows](#) Iran bulldozing and sanitizing Parchin as we speak. The verification regime has turned comic.

This tragicomedy is now in the hands of Congress or, more accurately, of congressional Democrats. It is only because so many Democrats are defecting that Obama gave the AU speech in the first place. And why he tried so mightily to turn the argument into a partisan issue — those warmongering Republicans attacking a president offering peace in our time. Obama stooped low, accusing the Republican caucus of making “common cause” with the Iranian “hard-liners” who shout “Death to America.”

Forget the gutter ad hominem. This is delusional. Does Obama really believe the Death-to-America hard-liners are some kind of KKK fringe? They are the government, for God’s sake — the entire state apparatus of the Islamic Republic from the Revolutionary Guards to the supreme leader Ayatollah Khamenei who for decades have propagated, [encouraged and applauded](#) those very same “Death to America” chants.

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NY Times

[3 U.S. Defeats: Vietnam, Iraq and Now Iran](#)

by David Brooks

The purpose of war, military or economic, is to get your enemy to do something it would rather not do. Over the past several years the United States and other Western powers have engaged in an economic, clandestine and political war against Iran to force it to give up its nuclear program.

Over the course of this siege, American policy makers have been very explicit about their goals. Foremost, to prevent Iran from becoming a nuclear power. Second, as John Kerry has said, to force it to dismantle a large part of its nuclear infrastructure. Third, to take away its power to enrich uranium.

Fourth, as President Obama has said, to close the Fordo enrichment facility. Fifth, as the chief American negotiator, Wendy Sherman, recently testified, to force Iran to come clean on all past nuclear activities by the Iranian military. Sixth, to shut down Iran’s ballistic missile program. Seventh, to have “anywhere, anytime 24/7” access to any nuclear facilities Iran retains. Eighth, as Kerry put it, to not phase down sanctions until after Iran ends its nuclear bomb-making capabilities.

As a [report from the Foreign Policy Initiative](#) exhaustively details, the U.S. has not fully achieved any of these objectives. The agreement delays but does not end Iran’s nuclear program. It legitimizes Iran’s status as a nuclear state. Iran will mothball some of its centrifuges, but it will not dismantle or close any of its nuclear facilities. Nuclear research and development will continue.

Iran wins the right to enrich uranium. The agreement does not include “anywhere, anytime” inspections; some inspections would require a 24-day waiting period, giving the Iranians plenty of time to clean things up. After eight years, all restrictions on ballistic missiles are lifted. Sanctions are lifted once Iran has taken its initial actions.

Wars, military or economic, are measured by whether you achieved your stated objectives. By this standard the U.S. and its allies lost the war against Iran, but we were able to negotiate terms that gave only our partial surrender, which forces Iran to at least delay its victory. There have now been three big U.S. strategic defeats over the past several decades: Vietnam, Iraq and now Iran.

The big question is, Why did we lose? Why did the combined powers of the Western world lose to a ragtag regime with a crippled economy and without much popular support?

The first big answer is that the Iranians just wanted victory more than we did. They were willing to withstand the kind of punishment we were prepared to mete out.

Further, the Iranians were confident in their power, while the Obama administration emphasized the limits of America's ability to influence other nations. It's striking how little President Obama thought of the tools at his disposal. He effectively took the military option off the table. He didn't believe much in economic sanctions. "Nothing we know about the Iranian government suggests that it would simply capitulate under that kind of pressure," [he argued](#).

The president concluded early on that Iran would simply not budge on fundamental things. As he argued in his highhanded and counterproductive [speech Wednesday](#), Iran was never going to compromise its sovereignty (which is the whole point of military or economic warfare).

The president hoped that a deal would change the moral nature of the regime, so he had an extra incentive to reach a deal. And the Western, Russian and Chinese sanctions regime was fragile while the Iranians were able to hang together.

This administration has given us a choice between two terrible options: accept the partial-surrender agreement that was negotiated or reject it and slide immediately into what is in effect our total surrender — a collapsed sanctions regime and a booming Iranian nuclear program.

Many members of Congress will be tempted to accept the terms of our partial surrender as the least bad option in the wake of our defeat. I get that. But in voting for this deal they may be affixing their names to an arrangement that will increase the chance of more comprehensive war further down the road.

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Jewish World Review

Our suddenly silent president

by Paul Greeberg

Silence comes in many varieties. It can be golden. Or just silence. Like the white space between the words on this page.

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Then there is the silence of an ordinarily glib politician who suddenly has nothing to say about an event in the news. As when the Hon. Barack Obama has no comment about those revealing videos featuring doctors with Planned Parenthood, who are caught talking about the fetal parts they're selling. The rest of the country may be repelled by those tapes, but our president remains ... silent.

How strange. Here is a president who's always had a lot of to say about a lot of things -- usually very smoothly. Whether the news of the day was the arrest of a black professor at his house near Harvard Square or the rash of black suspects shot down by white cops under suspicious circumstances, and the rioting that tends to follow.

Newspaper types could always count on this president for a quote about such matters. His usual response was to call for a National Conversation about race/inequality/fill-in-the-blank, depending on what subject had made the news of late.

But now our president has nothing to say about these revealing videos that strip Planned Parenthood of its cover. A national conversation about that subject would seem to be the last thing on his mind. He himself has studiously avoided the whole sordid subject. Call it an embarrassed silence.

Nor is the president the only one who's against discussing such matters. A court out in California has just issued a restraining order against the pro-life group that secretly recorded these videos. The order bars it from releasing any videos of leaders of StemExpress, the company Planned Parenthood uses as a go-between when it comes to buying and selling fetal tissue. Shut up, the court explains.

But others are speaking up, including a number of congressmen. It is Congress, after all, that holds the purse strings when it comes to financing Planned Parenthood's activities through federal grants, including those for the abortions that produce these fetal remains.

Planned Parenthood remains the country's largest abortion provider, thanks to your money, Dear Taxpayer. It performs about one out of every four abortions in this country. To quote one

study, "since 1970, Planned Parenthood has performed more than 6 million abortions. In 2013 alone, Planned Parenthood performed a record 357,653 abortions."

Death is Planned Parenthood's business, and we the taxpayers have become its accomplices. On a scale numbering in the hundreds of thousands every year.

Yes, Planned Parenthood's clinics provide women with a lot more than abortions, like cancer screenings, but those aren't the basis of its business model. Abortion is. Women getting abortions make up 12 percent of Planned Parenthood's patients -- 332,000 out of 3 million, according to its most current report. And some 37 percent of its income comes from abortions.

There are a lot of other organizations, like community health clinics, that deliver health services for women, and would welcome the federal money -- without doing abortions. It's long past time to cut off Planned Parenthood's water and support local clinics instead, clinics that don't leave a trail of fetal body parts behind.

What would the president think of that idea? No comment. Only an embarrassed silence. And no matter how much support the idea may have in the House, the Senate isn't about to desert Planned Parenthood. The scandal may already be fading.

Maybe the president thinks this whole thing will blow over soon. And maybe he's right. Americans grow harder and harder to shock every passing year. And with every passing outrage that no longer outrages, our shock threshold grows ever higher. So why wouldn't the president think we would just ignore these videos, too? The same way he ignored Kermit Gosnell's abortion clinic/house of horrors when it was in the news. We grow numb to such sights.

There's a demand for abortions, and Planned Parenthood proposes to meet it, along with the demand for fetal parts. Business is business. And it's booming. You can't argue with success.

How did we get to this point? To quote Leon Kass, doctor and moralist: "It's a short step from the belief that every child should be wanted to the belief that a child exists to satisfy our wants." Even for body parts.

WSJ

The Wages of Racial Discord

The president will leave office with race relations at their lowest ebb in decades. His politics of division bear much of the responsibility.

by Jason Riley



The president at a conference of the National Action Network, founded by Rev. Al Sharpton (right), April 11, 2014.

One great irony of the current presidency is that [Barack Obama](#) won the support of so many seasoned political journalists—not to mention otherwise-skeptical voters—who thought that a black president would improve racial unity. David Remnick of the New Yorker called him “the bridge.” Time magazine’s Joe Klein assured readers that Mr. Obama, who “transcends the racial divide so effortlessly,” would help America turn the page on race. But six years in, that hasn’t happened.

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But that is not how he has governed. As president, he has repeatedly—and often prematurely—taken sides in local police matters involving black suspects.

He has supported college-admissions policies that favor black applicants over their white and Asian peers. He has dispatched his attorney general to accuse advocates of voter ID laws of trying to disenfranchise blacks and Hispanics. He has pressured wealthy suburbs to change zoning laws and build low-income housing so that he can shoehorn minorities into neighborhoods where they otherwise can't afford to live. He has leaned on local school districts to discipline students differently based on their race and ethnicity rather than solely on their misbehavior. He has appeared before activists at the NAACP to denounce the criminal-justice system as racially skewed.

When Mr. Obama first ran for president, he went to such lengths to distance himself from professional agitators such as [Al Sharpton](#) and Jesse Jackson that "Saturday Night Live" ran a cartoon parody that featured then-Sen. Obama sending Messrs. Sharpton and Jackson off to places like Botswana and Paraguay so that they couldn't interfere with the campaign.

These days, Mr. Obama has the reverend on speed dial. Mr. Sharpton is a frequent White House visitor and the president's point man on civil-rights issues. Given that the president is keeping company with someone who monetizes racial conflict for a living, is it any wonder that so many people believe race relations have regressed?

In the CBS News/Times poll, 77% of respondents said that race relations in their own community were generally good, but only 37% said they were good nationwide. One explanation for the disparity could be that the president's emphasis on race in general and racial conflict in particular has made things seem worse than they really are. Presidents—especially the ones who can count on mostly favorable mainstream-media coverage—have the ability to control the narrative. And racial strife, or the perception of it, works to the political advantage of Mr. Obama and the political left.

The Black Lives Matter movement may be built on a falsehood—that cops shooting blacks is somehow a bigger problem than blacks shooting each other—but the falsehood will be indulged by politicians like Mr. Obama because the last thing Democrats want is for black people to stop seeing themselves as helpless victims of systemic racism.

"A central problem—perhaps *the* central problem—in improving the relationship between white and black Americans is the difference in racial crime rates," observed the late political scientist James Q. Wilson. "The high black crime rate cannot be wished away by talk of racism, overarresting, excessive punishment, or whites having allegedly drugged or armed blacks."

Race relations under Mr. Obama haven't soured by accident, and so long as a wisher-in-chief occupies the Oval Office, there is little chance of improvement. Community organizers

specialize in creating social divisions, not bridging them. So do presidents who profit politically from racial anxiety. America has learned these lessons the hard way.

Mr. Riley, a Manhattan Institute senior fellow and Journal contributor, is the author of "Please Stop Helping Us: How Liberals Make It Harder for Blacks to Succeed" (Encounter Books, 2014).

National Review

Israeli Preemptive Action, Western Reaction

Will Israel do the unthinkable to stop the unimaginable?

by Victor Davis Hanson

The Obama administration seems peeved that almost everyone in Israel, left and right, has no use for the present Iranian–American deal to thwart Iran’s efforts to get the bomb.

Indeed, at times John Kerry has hinted darkly that Israel’s opposition to the pact might incur American wrath should the deal be tabled — even though Kerry knows that the polls show a clear majority of Americans being against the proposed agreement while remaining quite supportive of the Jewish state. President Obama, from time to time, suggests that his agreement is being sabotaged by nefarious lobbying groups, big-time check writers, and neoconservative supporters of the Iraq war — all shorthand, apparently, for pushy Jewish groups.

Obama and his negotiators seem surprised that Israelis take quite seriously Iranian leaders’ taunts over the past 35 years that they would like to liquidate the Jewish state and everyone in it. The Israelis, for some reason, remember that well before Hitler came to power, he had bragged about the idea of killing Jews en masse in his sloppily composed autobiographical *Mein Kampf*. Few in Germany or abroad had taken the raving young Hitler too seriously. Even in the late 1930s, when German Jews were being rounded up and haphazardly killed on German streets by state-sanctioned thugs, most observers considered such activities merely periodic excesses or outbursts from non-governmental Black- and Brownshirts.

The Obama administration, with vast oceans between Tehran and the United States, tsks-tsks over Iranian threats as revolutionary hyperbole served up for domestic consumption. The Israelis, with less than a thousand miles between themselves and Tehran, do not — and cannot. Given the 20th century’s history, Israel has good reason not to trust either the United States or Europe to ensure the security of the Jewish state. Israel has learned from the despicable anti-Semitism now prevalent at the U.N. and from the increasing thuggery directed at Jews in Europe that the world at large would shed crocodile tears over the passing of Israel on the day of its destruction, but, the next day, sigh and get right back to business in a “that was then, this is now” style.

In 1981 the Israelis took out the Iraqi nuclear reactor — sold to Saddam Hussein by France. They were ritually blasted as state terrorists and worse by major U.S. newspapers and at the United Nations — though not by Khomeini’s Iran, which earlier had failed in a preemptive bombing strike to do much damage to the Osirak reactor. Today, in retrospect, most nations are privately glad that the Israelis removed the reactor from a country that had hundreds of years’

worth of natural-gas and oil supplies and no need for nuclear power — and that is now under assault from ISIS.

In 2007, when the Israelis preempted once more, and destroyed the al-Kibar nuclear facility that was under construction in Syria, the world, after initial silence, again in Pavlovian fashion became outraged at such preemptive bombing. The global chorus claimed that there was no intelligence confirming that the North Koreans had helped to launch a Syrian uranium-enrichment plant.

Yet eight years later, most observers abroad once again privately shrug that Bashar Assad most certainly had hired the Koreans to build a nuclear processing plant — and are quietly satisfied that the Israelis took care of it. Note that the al-Kibar site lies in territory now controlled by ISIS. One can imagine a variety of terrifying contemporary scenarios had the Israelis not preempted. Most of those who condemned Israel's attack would now be worrying about an ISIS improvised explosive device, packed with dirty uranium, that might go off in a major Western city.

In all these cases, the Israelis assumed that Western intelligence about nuclear proliferation in the Middle East was unreliable. They took for granted that Westerners automatically would blame Israelis for any preemptive attack against an Islamic nuclear site. And they likewise concluded that, privately and belatedly, Westerners would eventually be happy that the Israelis had belled the would-be nuclear cat.

But in a larger sense, the Israelis also recall the sad story of the West and the Holocaust less than 75 years ago — a horror central to the birthing of a “never again” Jewish state. By 1943, the outlines of the Nazis' Final Solution were well known in both Washington and London; Jews were already being gassed at German death camps in Poland in an effort to kill every Jew from the Atlantic Ocean to the Volga River.

It was also a matter of record that the major Western democracies — America, Britain, and prewar France — had refused sanctuary to millions of Jewish refugees who had been stripped of their property by the Third Reich and told to leave Germany and its occupied territories. In some notorious cases, shiploads of Jews were turned away after docking in Western ports and were sent back to Nazi-occupied Europe, where the passengers were disembarked and soon afterward gassed. Moreover, Israelis understand that Hitler's Final Solution would have been far more difficult to implement without the active participation of sympathetic anti-Semites in occupied European nations, who volunteered to round up their own Jews and send them on German trains eastward to the death camps.

In the case of the United States, anti-Semitic or indifferent officials high up in the State Department and elsewhere within the Roosevelt administration went out of their way to hide data about the plight of Jewish refugees, and circumvented protocol in order to refuse entry into the United States to the vast majority of Jews fleeing the Holocaust. The British were nearly as exclusionary, and also did their best to stop Jewish refugees from fleeing to Palestine to escape the death camps.

As it happens, Fascist and Nazi-allied Japan was sometimes more sympathetic to Jews desperate to leave Europe than were the Allies. Indeed, Hitler and his Nazi top echelon constantly bragged about the fact that neither the Allied powers nor occupied European nations wanted to take Jews off Berlin's hands — proof, in Nazi eyes, of a supportive wink-and-nod attitude to the Holocaust. Each time the Allies published a threat to the Nazi leadership that there would be an accounting and war-crime trials after the war, Hitler, Goebbels, and Himmler remembered that none of these outraged governments wanted to accept Jews themselves, and

thus they must secretly still have remained indifferent to their fate. Thus the threats rang hollow to the Nazis, and the crematoria burned on.

By mid-1943 at the latest, American authorities had comprehensive knowledge — from firsthand reports by camp escapees, from photo reconnaissance, and from brave Germans who passed on detailed inside information through the neutral Swiss — of the vast scope of the Holocaust. They were constantly beseeched by international Jewish advocates to at least bomb the crematoria and gas chambers at Auschwitz, which were within range of the Allies' four-engine heavy bombers. Indeed, an Allied bombing mission would on occasion hit one of the key German factories that surrounded Auschwitz itself — to the delight of the doomed inmates of the death camps.

Given that eventually over 10,000 Jews per day were being gassed and cremated at Auschwitz, almost every Jewish leader advocated bombing the camps to destroy the rail links, the intricate camp machinery, and the SS guards so essential to the perpetration of the Holocaust. Again, such pleas were met with both indifference and lies, once more offered up by heralded American statesmen like U.S. Assistant Secretary of State Breckinridge Long and well-connected consigliere and future “wise man” John McCloy of the War Department. The latter falsely argued at times that the camps were not really in reach of Allied bombers, or that the numbers of Jews being slaughtered were exaggerated, or that the diversion of even one or two missions from the strategic bombing of Germany would hamper the entire Allied war effort.

After the war, with rising Cold War tensions and a need to ensure that the West German public remained firmly in the new NATO alliance, many Nazi war criminals either were let out of prison early, had their sentences commuted, or were never charged at all. For all the Western empathy about the horrific Final Solution, Jews remembered (1) that it would once have been possible to save many fleeing Jews, if only the democracies had just allowed in political refugees; (2) that many of the death camps could have been leveled by Allied bombers in their last year or two of full-bore operation, saving perhaps 2 to 3 million of the doomed; and (3) that the political expediency of the postwar Western alliance had trumped bringing Nazi war criminals to a full accounting for their horrendous acts.

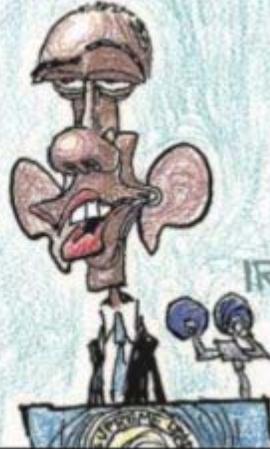
The Israelis have taken to heart lots of lessons over the last 70 years. They have concluded that often the world quietly wants Israel to deal with existential threats emanating from the Middle East while loudly damning it when it does. They have learned from the experience of the Holocaust that, for good or evil, Jews are on their own and can never again trust in the world's professed humanity to prevent another Holocaust. And they are convinced that they can also never again err on the side of the probability that national leaders, with deadly weapons in their grasp, do not really mean all the unhinged things they shout and scream about killing Jews.

Given all that, we should conclude that any deal that leads, now or in the near future, to an Iranian bomb is unacceptable to Israel — a nation that will likely soon have no choice but to consider the unthinkable in order to prevent the unimaginable.

EITHER
YOU'RE
WITH ME...



OR YOU'RE A
KNEE-JERK
PARTISAN.



IRAN ~~TREATY~~
DEAL

Before Obama's
nuke deal with
Iran...



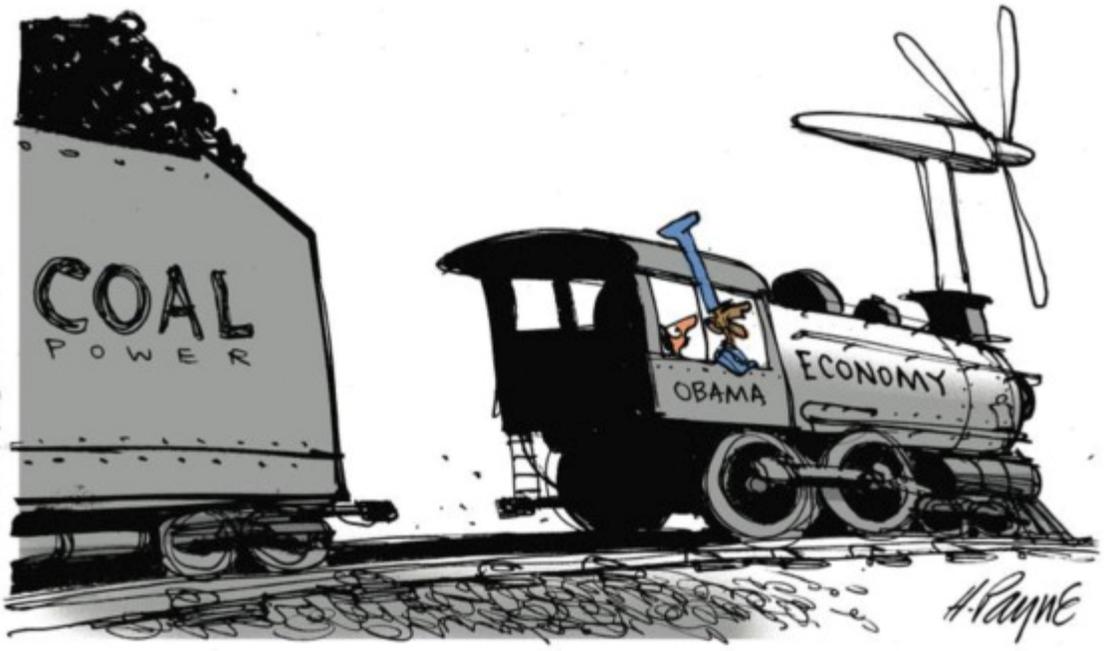
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