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## Face the facts on Iran agreement

Since the P5+1 Joint Plan of Action on Iran's Nuclear Program was signed in Geneva in November, the White House has encountered two difficult truths about the Iranian regime.

Rouhani's manipulation of U.S. negotiators ended Tehran's isolation and secured time in return for empty promises that furthered the regime's nuclear objectives.

And the clerics have no intention of dialing back their weapons program.

As the White House rolls the dice on a permanent pact and embraces the failed strategy of appeasement, Congress should place a check on the administration's unwillingness to face the facts.

A nuclear compromise with Tehran will surrender the peace, not secure it.

The president's State of the Union address was full of calls for action but not on Iran where he channeled Jimmy Carter by treating the regime as a fixture of the Middle East landscape.

The remarks reinforced an emerging consensus that Obama is in over his head and will bequeath his successor a new nuclear power.

Fareed Zakaria recently noted that Americans have generally given the president high marks on global matters but questioned the character of Obama's foreign policy:

"While Obama has accomplishments to his credit, the signature trait that has helped him steer the country well – and receive credit for it – is what he has not done."

The U.S. policy of engagement with the Iranian regime at the expense of concerns raised by key allies – including Israel and Saudi Arabia – has chilled U.S. relations with global partners and strengthened Tehran's hand in discussions with the U.N. Security Council and Germany.

Iranian interpretations of the interim agreement also preserved the perks of the arrangement – including access to currency and the lifting of sanctions – while necessitating few obligations that would serve global security interests.

Today the Iranian nuclear program is not "halted" as the president suggested in his SOTU speech. Nor is it required to "eliminate" its stockpile of 20 percent-enriched uranium.

In fact uranium enriched at less than 20 percent weapons grade levels is likely to grow in the short term and the regime continues to advance its nuclear infrastructure while world powers dither.

Here's what Congress can do to contain White House missteps on Iran policy:

### 1) Pass the Nuclear Weapons Free Iran Act.

The lifting of sanctions gave life to a regime suffering from political and economic isolation and internal discontent. Parliamentary maneuvers and White House opposition should not get in the way of bipartisan legislation – The Nuclear Weapons Free Iran Act – that would guarantee the regime pays a cost for breaching diplomatic agreements. Passage of the bill won't derail the negotiations. It will incentivize good faith discussions.

The 59 co-sponsors of the legislation – more than half of the U.S. Senate – should increase the pressure on Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid to bring the measure to the floor for prompt consideration.

### 2) Protect the intelligence capabilities of the Iranian opposition.

The most useful human intelligence on Iranian nuclear activities will come from the three-thousand Iranian dissidents, the Mujahedin-e Khalq (MEK), who are detained at Camp Liberty in Iraq and their global network of supporters. The group has a long track record of providing intelligence on Tehran's nuclear program and is responsible for the disclosures that prompted the first round of global sanctions.

Unsurprisingly, Tehran's proxies – including Iraqi security forces – attacked the dissidents in Iraq repeatedly between 2009-2013. There were four rockets attacks on Liberty in 2013 alone and the safety of seven hostages – including six women – remains unclear in spite of global condemnation. The attacks resulted in hundreds of deaths, in violation of Geneva conventions and in spite of U.S. promises to protect.

The U.S. Congress must take up legislation to protect those detained at Liberty and ensure safe transfer to locations outside of Iraq. Any larger accord with the regime on the nuclear issue must involve the prompt resettlement of the dissidents.

### 3) Investigate the regime's Washington lobby.

Congress can launch investigations to identify ties between the regime's Washington lobby and U.S. policymakers. Tehran's apologists in the U.S. should not be in a position to drive legislative considerations, influence policy, or curtail security interests. Nor should pro-regime sympathies go without scrutiny.

Now is the time for Congress to do what the White House has failed to do and stiffen the penalties on Iranian non-compliance, address human rights issues, enhance intelligence collection, and increase the pressure on the Iranian regime.

Pacifying the mullahs will neither soften Tehran's stance on the nuclear issue nor will it facilitate the emergence of a responsible global partner.

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