

Iran and “The Bomb”

There was a time when the number one item on the liberal agenda was fear of nuclear proliferation. I remember as a child my mother hearing reports of Strontium 90 in milk as a result of atmospheric testing of nuclear weapons. She traveled to Cow Lane, which was the last remaining dairy farm in our community, to get fresh milk. I have vivid memories of crouching in the hallway of our school during air raid drills, imagining what it would be like to experience the blinding flash and explosion which would eradicate humanity. Perhaps my strongest fears of nuclear war were stoked by attending a Passover Seder at a neighbor's house. They had an older child, and after the Seder the kids went to play. The boy had a puzzle map of the United States. He took out the states and tossed them aside as he explained the devastation that would follow a nuclear exchange. There is no doubt that President Obama wants to avoid nuclear proliferation and nuclear war. Like many people, he rejects the use of force and is dependent upon the hope that nations will act like rational individuals.

The Kellogg-Briand Pact, enacted as a Treaty in 1928, was supposed to eliminate the danger of war. The United States abided by the treaty, but Germany did not. Neville Chamberlain thought he had worked out the differences between the super powers of his day and that Germany would make the rational choice of peace rather than enter into another bloody world conflagration.

In a very small insignificant way, I can understand how President Obama thought about his options. Approximately 15 years ago, I was sent to lobby on a Bill concerning liability for companies that took over the business of asbestos manufacturers. Asbestos was well known by that time as the cause of mesothelioma. Corporations taking over the asbestos business wanted to be sheltered from liability. When I went into the meeting with the lead Senator on the subject, I was tapped on the shoulder by the Republican strategist and lobbyist who had accompanied me. He said, “Cliff, just remember you have one, maybe two or three votes against this bailout bill.” He then said, “Just make the best deal you can.” I made the argument to the Senator that the Bill was unconstitutional as special legislation in bailing out one corporation. The Senate did not listen to me, the Bill was passed, and it was subsequently struck down as unconstitutional.

In March 2015, when I was in the Middle East, a well-known political operative told me, “There is going to be a deal on Iran.” I asked him how he could be so sure, and he argued that the decision would be driven by economic interest and money, and without question there would be a deal.

When the United States announced that an agreement had been reached with Iran, I determined to read it, together with the footnotes, before all the talking heads and self-made experts weighed in on the subject. Reading the agreement revealed the following:

- (1) The preamble and the general statement of principles are wonderful. The language of the agreement is that nuclear war and instruments of destruction should be banned forever. None of this is binding, but they are wonderful statements that all nations should subscribe to;
- (2) Virtually every important portion of the agreement in terms of Iran's compliance with the diminished nuclear capacity begins with the word "voluntary." Iran is not required to do much of anything, unless it wants to;
- (3) Iran may keep uranium in other countries exempt from the enrichment limitations contained within the agreement, and may purchase enriched uranium. This exception is big enough to permit Iran easily to obtain uranium for the creation of nuclear weaponry. Would Korea hesitate to store Iran's enriched uranium or to sell Iran the uranium it needs to destroy the Western world?
- (4) Iran will be permitted to get rid of its old and inefficient centrifuges and develop technology for new ones. Centrifuges are utilized to create a more pure form of uranium so that it could be used for weapons grade purposes.
- (5) Plasma, which is super-heated gas, and fusion technology will be shared with Iran. There is no known current peaceful purpose for plasma or fusion technology. Fusion of the hydrogen atom is utilized for the purpose of creating a hydrogen bomb. The search is on to try to recreate the power of the sun on earth in a peaceful manner, but why trust Iran to do that?
- (6) The Iran protocols will provide billions for terror, which Iran has proven itself adept at utilizing. The Islamic fundamentalists who rule Iran have left no doubt about their intentions to conquer by the sword, to subjugate nonbelievers, and to destroy the infidel. Why should we **not** believe them?

Could a better deal have been achieved? The only compelling reason the administration has given as to why all sanctions have to be totally lifted is that the sanctions regime was going to fall apart anyway. Typically, when sanctions are lifted on a nation violating the rule of law, it is done on a step-by-step basis where good behavior is rewarded by economic benefit. We did that successfully with the Soviet Union and a myriad of other human rights offenders.

The central portion of the agreement with Iran is approximately 25-35 pages long, including the preamble and statement of principles. Most of the agreement contains extremely strong language concerning the lifting of sanctions. The repercussions for not

lifting the sanctions swiftly and completely are greater than the threat posed to Iran from not complying with the weak limitations on its nuclear program.

One cannot read the agreement without being struck by the fact that it is essentially a document dealing with economics. Tens of millions of cheap Iranian oil will flow to Europe, which is hungry for cheap energy, in order to jumpstart lagging economies. Iran, with its 35 million people, is considered to be a “hot spot” for European investment, whose nations are rushing into the abyss with military and technological equipment. The lifting of sanctions on Iran is a financial bonanza for Iran.

President Obama is facing an economy with only 5.1% of people unemployed. Gas prices are plummeting. The President has taken a page from Bill Clinton’s book, fully realizing that “it’s the economy stupid.”

We are exposing ourselves and the world to massive military and physical threats in order to keep the economies of Western Europe and the United States humming along at a robust pace. As a nation, we will have to face whether we have made the correct decision by empowering the leadership in Iran which hates our way of life.

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