

Behind the US Congress' "Disagreements" over the Iran Nuclear Deal

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The hysterical campaign launched against the Iran nuclear deal by the flag-waving militarist partisans in and around the US congress has terribly obfuscated the issues included in the deal. Not surprisingly, the campaign has created a number of misconceptions regarding both the actual contents of the deal and the main disagreements between the advocates and opponents of the deal.

One such misconception is that the deal is, or must be, more advantageous to Iran than the US and Israel; otherwise, the simple logic goes, there would not be so much opposition to it. Such impressions, created simply by all the hue and cry on the part of the opponents of the deal are patently false. Even a cursory reading of the nuclear agreement reveals that, as I pointed out [in a recent article](#) on the issue, it is highly skewed against Iran. Not only does the agreement downgrade and freeze Iran's peaceful nuclear technology, it also limit the scope of the country's scientific research and development, jeopardize its national security or defense capabilities and, perhaps most importantly, undermine its national sovereignty.

So, considering the fact the deal represents a big win for the US and its allies and, by the same token, a major loss for Iran, why all the uproar against it?

A number of reasons can be thought of for all the war party's feverish hullabaloo. The main reason, however, seems to be that while the deal obviously represents a fantastic victory for the US and its allies, it nonetheless falls short of what the war party projected and fought for, that is, devastating regime change by military means, similar to what was done to Iraq and Libya.

The second misconception that the war party's vehement opposition to the nuclear deal has created is that their ultimate goal vis-à-vis Iran is significantly different from that of the Obama administration and other proponents of the deal. In reality, however, the difference between the opponents and proponents of the deal is largely tactical; strategically, both factions pursue the same objective: regime change in Iran.

While the advocates of the deal have in recent years switched their tactics from direct military intervention and regime change from without to *soft-power* methods of regime change from within, the opponents of the deal continue to insist that overwhelming military force and escalating economic strangulation are the more effective means of regime change in Tehran, that is, regime change from outside.

This does not mean that the advocates of the nuclear deal have ruled out the military option altogether—by no means. As President Obama, Secretary of State John Kerry and other administration officials have frequently pointed out, the military option is *on the table*

when/if needed, that is, if Iran fails to carry out all the punishing obligations under the nuclear deal.

The tactical switch by the proponents of the deal from military to *soft-power* methods of regime change did not come about overnight, or by an epiphany. For over thirty years since the 1979 revolution in Iran, which significantly undermined the U.S. influence in that country and elsewhere in the region, these proponents, like their counterparts in the war party, pursued policies of regime change from outside. These included instigation of and support for Saddam Hussein to invade Iran, training and supporting destabilizing terrorist organizations to attack Iran from all corners of the country, constant war and military threats, efforts to sabotage the 2009 presidential election through the so-called “green revolution,” and systematic escalation of economic sanctions.

Not only did these evil schemes fall short of their nefarious goal of “regime change” in Iran, they in fact drove the country to become a major power in the region.

In the face of the brutal economic sanctions and constant military threats, Iran embarked on a relatively radical path of a public/state-guided economy that successfully provided both for the war mobilization to defend its territorial integrity and for respectable living conditions of its population. By taking control of the commanding heights of the national economy, and effectively utilizing the revolutionary energy and dedication of their people, Iranian policy makers at the time also succeeded in taking significant steps toward economic self-reliance, which further thwarted the geopolitical plans of the US and its allies to bring Iran to its knees, or to overthrow its government.

Having thus failed at its plots of “regime change” from without, a major faction of the US ruling class, headed by the Obama administration, now seems to have opted for regime change (or reform) from within; that is, through political and economic rapprochement with Iran—using the nuclear negotiations as a starting point, or transitional channel.

What has made this option more promising in recent years is the rise of well-organized, Western-oriented neoliberal capitalist class in Iran whose chief priority seems to be the ability to do business with their counterparts in the West.

Many of the once revolutionary leaders who successfully managed the 1980-88 war economy have now become business entrepreneurs and prosperous capitalists. Having effectively enriched themselves in the shadow of the public sector economy, these folks are now ready to do business *American style*, that is, follow the neoliberal/austerity model of economics.

It is thus understandable why major factions within Iran’s ruling circles, represented largely by the Rouhani administration, have no stomach for a regimented, war-like economy; and why they support the highly disgraceful compromises made by Iran’s nuclear negotiators to the United States and its allies. For the rich and powerful elites of these circles issues such as nuclear technology or national sovereignty are of secondary importance to self-enrichment, or profit motive.

It follows that the Obama administration and other US advocates of the nuclear deal opted for negotiation with Iran only after they came to the realization that (a) continuing on the path of regime change from outside tended to be ineffective, or even counterproductive, and (b) the rise of a pro-US, collaborationist capitalist class in Iran increasingly promised to

be a more effective vehicle of spreading the US influence in Iran and, ultimately, of regime change from within.

Indeed, the Obama administration's recent approach of relying primarily on business/market forces of regime change, or modification, without ruling out the military option is likely to be more effective in achieving its goal than the war party's reckless insistence on escalating sanctions and military threats.

The effectiveness of this approach lies in the fact that, as pointed out earlier, the nuclear deal would significantly limit Iran's military and defense capabilities. The deal would also avail the US extensive knowledge of Iran's economic, technological, security, and military capabilities and, therefore, vulnerabilities. This means that if at any time in the future Iran defies or resists the heavy-handed imperialistic designs of the United States, the US can then employ its war machine more effectively as it would have the necessary information on strategic places or targets to be attacked or bombarded.

This is no speculation or conspiracy theory. It is, indeed, a scenario projected by the Obama administration officials and other advocates of the nuclear deal as they promote it ahead of the next month's critical vote in Congress. "In meetings on Capitol Hill and with influential policy analysts, administration officials argue that inspections of Iran's nuclear facilities under the deal will reveal important details that can be used for better targeting should the U.S. decide to attack Iran" [1].

Commenting on this ominous depraved scheme, Representative Adam Schiff, the ranking Democrat on the House Intelligence Committee, Told Michael Crowley of the *Politico*, "It's certainly an argument I've heard made. . . . We'll be better off with the agreement were we to need to use force" [2].

To see how this menacing projection is not simply an abstract or partisan argument, suffice it to remember the fact that this is exactly what was done to Iraq and Libya. In both cases, the United States and its allies used disingenuous negotiations with Saddam Hussein and Muammar al-Qaddafi as pretexts to collect information about their military/defense capabilities and, then, used the information thus acquired for targeted bombardment and effective invasion.

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References

[1] Michael Crowley, [The ultimate argument in favor of the Iran deal](#): The agreement would make it easier to bomb Iran, administration officials have told lawmakers.

[2] Ibid.

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