

JCPOA: The Iran Nuclear Deal that Wasn't

By [Soraya Sepahpour-Ulrich](#)

Global Research, July 10, 2020

Region: [Middle East & North Africa, USA](#)

Theme: [Law and Justice, Militarization and WMD, US NATO War Agenda](#)

In-depth Report: [IRAN: THE NEXT WAR?](#)

July 14th, 2020, marks the fifth anniversary of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) Agreement, often referred to as the Iran Nuclear Deal (or simply the Deal) – the Deal that wasn't. It was yet another attempt at regime change.

Of all the plans to control Iran beginning from Operation Ajax to Operation JCPOA and everything in between, the Iran Nuclear Deal was by far the most devious attempt at undermining the sovereignty of Iran – one way or another. The Greek's Trojan Horse pales compared to this dastardly scheme. Years in the making, the crafty plan even prompted Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI) to [nominate John Kerry and Javad Zarif](#) to recipients of the Nobel Peace Prize.

As such, it is high time that the Deal's planners, their motivations and their associations were discussed in order to grasp the depth of the deception.

Iran, due to its geopolitical position, has always been considered a jewel in the crown of the colonial powers. Attempts to conquer Iran through a proxy which started with Operation Ajax in August 1953, at the behest of the British and carried out by the CIA were not abandoned even with the ousting of America's man, the Shah. Although the Islamic Revolution reclaimed Iran's sovereignty, America was not ready to abandon its plans of domination over Iran, and by extension, the Persian Gulf.

The Persian Gulf has been the lynchpin of US foreign policy. "To all intents and purposes," a former senior Defense Department official observed, "'Gulf waters' now extend from the Straits of Malacca to the South Atlantic." Nevertheless, bases nearer the [Persian] Gulf had a special importance, and Pentagon planners urged "as substantial a land presence in the as can be managed." (*Anthony H. Cordesman, "The Gulf and the Search for Strategic Stability", Boulder: Westview, 1984*).

Having failed in numerous attempts including the Nojeh coup at the nascent stages of the IR Iran's newly formed government, war, sanctions, terrorism, and a failed color revolution, the United States needed other alternatives to reach its goal. Unlike the illegal war against Iraq, war with Iran was not a feasible option. The United States was aware of its inability to wage a successful war against Iran without serious damage to itself and its allies.

When George W. Bush took office, he commissioned a war exercise to gage the feasibility of an attack against Iran. The [2002 Millennium Challenge](#), was a major [war game](#) exercise conducted by the [United States Armed Forces](#) in mid-2002. The exercise, which ran from July 24 to August 15 and cost \$250 million, proved that the US would not defeat Iran. The US even restarted the war games changing rules to ensure an American victory, in reality,

cheating itself. This led to accusations that the war game had turned from an honest, open, playtest of U.S. war-fighting capabilities into a controlled and scripted exercise intended to end in a U.S. victory to promote a false narrative of US invincibility.

For this reason, the United States continued its attempts at undermining Iran's sovereignty by means of sanctions, terror, and creating divisions among the Iranians. The JCPOA would be its master plan.

A simple observation of Iran clearly suggests simple ideological divisions among the Iranian people (pro-West, anti-West, minorities, religious, secular) which have all been amply exploited by the United States and allies. None of the exploits delivered the prize the US was seeking. And so it was that it was decided to exploit the one factor which united Iranians of ALL persuasion. Iran's civilian nuclear program.

In an interview with National Public Radio (25 November 2004), Ray Takyeh (Council on Foreign Relations CFR and husband to Iran expert Suzanne Maloney of Brookings) stated that according to polls 75-80% of the Iranians rallied behind the Islamic Republic of Iran in support of its nuclear program, including the full fuel cycle. In other words, the overwhelming uniting factor among the Iranians for the Islamic Republic was the nuclear program. (USIA poll conducted in 2007 found that 64% of those questioned said that US legislation repealing regime change in Iran would not be incentive enough to give up the nuclear program and full fuel-cycle). The next phase was to cause disunity on an issue that united Iranians of all stripes: negotiate away the nuclear program.

The first round of nuclear negotiations 2003-2005 dubbed the Paris Agreement between Iran and the EU3 proved to be futile, and as one European diplomat put it: "[We gave them a beautiful box of chocolate that was, however, empty.](#)" As West's fortune would have it, the same Iranian officials who had participated in the 2003-2005 negotiations would negotiate the JCPOA.

Around the time of the end of the first round of negotiations, another Brookings Fellow, Flynt Leverett, senior advisor for National Security Center, published a book "Inheriting Syria, Bashar's Trial by Fire" (Brookings book publication, April 2005). In his book, Leverett argued that instead of conflict, George W. Bush should seek to cooperate with Syria as Assad was popular, but instead seek to weaken Assad's position among his people by targeting the Golan (induce him to give it up) so that he would lose popularity among the Syrians. The JCPOA was designed in part along the same line of thinking. And more. His wife Hillary Leverett had a prominent role in 'selling' the Deal.

Secret negotiations between the Americans and 'reform-minded' Iranians never ceased, bypassing both Ayatollah Khamenei, Iran's supreme leader, and the President at the time - Mahmood Ahmadinejad. In a [2012 meeting](#) at the University of Southern California, present members of the Iran Project team had no reservations about suggesting that it was more beneficial to engage Iran rather than attack. They went as far as stating in the Q&A session to this writer that "they had been engaged with the "Green" (the opposition movement in the failed 2009 color revolution) for years, but Ahmadinejad won" (referring to the 2009 elections). But Ahmadinejad would soon leave office and be replaced by Rohani - a more amenable player.

Why Negotiate?

Fully appreciating the challenge of attacking Iran, in 2004, the pro-Israel *Washington Institute for Near East Policy* (WINEP), presented its policy paper "[The Challenges of U.S. Preventive Military Action](#)" authored by Michael Eisenstadt. It was opined that the ideal situation was (and continues to be) to have a compliant 'regime' in Tehran. Eisenstadt was of the opinion that unlike the Osiraq nuclear power plant which was bombed and destroyed, Isarel/US would not be able to bomb Iran's Bushehr reactor with the same ease. In particular, Eisenstadt claimed that Israel may have benefited from French aid in destroying Osiraq. French intelligence reportedly emplaced a homing beacon at Osiraq to help Israeli pilots locate the facility or target a critical underground structure there.

In this light, it was recommended that the principal goal of U.S. action should be to delay Iran's nuclear program long enough to allow for the possible emergence of new leadership in Tehran. Failing that, war would have been facilitated.

It was thought the Paris Agreement talks would fail (as the JCPOA was designed to fail) and as such, the following were some of the suggestions made:

- harassment or murder of key Iranian scientists or technicians;
- introduction of fatal design flaws into critical reactor, centrifuge, or weapons components during their production, to ensure catastrophic failure during use;
- disruption or interdiction of key technology or material transfers through sabotage or covert military actions on land, in the air, or at sea;
- sabotage of critical facilities by U.S. intelligence assets, including third country nationals or Iranian agents with access to key facilities;
- introduction of destructive viruses into Iranian computer systems controlling the production of components or the operation of facilities;
- damage or destruction of critical facilities through sabotage or direct action by U.S. special forces.

As with the murder and terror of the nuclear scientists, and the Stuxnet virus into the reactor, the JCPOA enabled personnel on the ground in Iran to carry out extensive sabotage as has been recently observed in recent days and weeks. Rohani's visa free travel opened the flood gates to spies and saboteurs - dual citizens, who easily traveled with passports other than American, British, and Australian. Iran even managed to prevent an IAEA inspector [who triggered an alarm](#) at Iran's nuclear facility. But it would seem, Iran has not been able to stop other intruders and terrorists - not yet.

Other Motivational Factors for Negotiating

According to studies, as of 2008 Iran's Bushehr nuclear reactor had 82 tons of enriched uranium (U235) loaded into it, according to [Israeli](#) and [Chinese](#) reports. This amount was significantly higher pre and during negotiations. History has not witnessed the bombing of a nuclear power plant with an operational nuclear enrichment facility. Deliberate bombing of such facilities would result breach containment and radioactive elements released. The death toll horrifying. The [Union of Concerned Scientists](#) has estimated 3 million deaths would result in 3 weeks from bombing the nuclear enrichment facilities near Esfahan, and the contamination would cover Afghanistan, Pakistan, all the way to India.

The JCPOA significantly reduced the amount of enriched uranium reducing the potential casualty deaths in the event that a strike is carried out.

The Deal buys time - Iran's strength has been its ability to retaliate to any attack by closing down the Strait of Hormuz. Given that [17 million barrels of oil a day](#), or 35% of the world's seaborne oil exports go through the Strait of Hormuz, incidents in the Strait would be fatal for the world economy. Enter Nigeria (West Africa) and Yemen.

In 1998, Clinton's national security agenda made it clear that unhampered access to Nigerian oil and other vital resources was a key US policy. In early 2000s, Chatham House was one of the publications that determined African oil would be a good alternate to Persian Gulf oil *in case of oil disruption*. This followed a strategy paper for US to move toward African oil. Push for African oil was on Dick Cheney's desk on May 31, 2000. In 2002, the Israeli based [IASPS](#) suggested America push toward African oil. In the same year [Boko Haram](#) was 'founded'.

In 2007, AFRICOM helped consolidate this push into the region. The 2011, a publication titled: "[Globalizing West African Oil: US 'energy security' and the global economy](#)" outlined 'US positioning itself to use military force to ensure African oil continued to flow to the United States'. This was but one strategy to supply oil in addition to or as an alternate to the passage of oil through the Strait of Hormuz. (See [HERE](#) for full article)

JCPOA as a starting point

It has now been made abundantly clear that the Deal was simply JCPOA1. Other Deals were to follow to disarm Iran even further, to stop Iran's defensive missile program, and to stop Iran helping its allies in the region. This would have been relatively easy to achieve had Hillary Clinton been elected - as had been the hope. The plan was to allow trade and neoliberal policies which the Rohani administration readily embraced, a sharp increase in imports (harming domestic production and self-reliance) while building hope - or as Maloney called it 'crisis of expectation'. It was thought that with a semblance of 'normalcy' in international relations and free of sanctions, Iranians would want to continue abandoning their sovereignty, their defenses, and rally around the pro-West/America politicians at the expense of the core ideology of the Islamic Revolution, the conservatives and the IRGC. In other words, regime change. (several meetings speak to this; see for [example](#), and [here](#)).

The players

The most prominent, one could argue, was President Obama. Obama was not about peace. The biggest threat to an empire is peace. Obama had chosen feigned diplomacy as his weapon. But before picking up the mantle of diplomacy, he had proposed terrorism - sanctioned terrorism. Obama, while a junior senator introduced [S. 1430 in 2007](#) and had "crippling sanctions" in mind for the Iranian people. As president, his executive orders assured this.

Addressing AIPAC as a candidate, he said: "[Our willingness to pursue diplomacy will make it easier to mobilize others to join our cause. If Iran fails to change course when presented with this choice by the United States it will be clear to the people of Iran and to the world that the Iranian regime is the author of its own isolation and that will strengthen our hand with Russia and China as we insist on stronger sanctions in the Security Council. And we should work with Europe, Japan, and the Gulf States to find every avenue outside the United Nations to isolate the Iranian regime from cutting off loan guarantees and expanding financial sanctions to banning the export of refined petroleum to Iran to boycotting firms associated with the Iranian Revolutionary Guard whose Kuds forces have rightly been](#)

[labeled a terrorist organization.”](#)

No wonder he was dubbed [‘the first Jewish president’!](#)

Not to be left unmentioned was the darling of the theatrics of this Deal – Federica Mogherini. So enamored were some of the Iranian parliamentarians with her that to the embarrassment of Iran, the internet was abuzz with these MPs taking pictures with her. Perhaps they looked at her and not her years as a [German Marshall Fund Fellow](#).

The German Marshall Fund (GMF) sounds harmless enough, but perhaps Russia many not view it that way. And Iran shouldn't. The GMF pushed for bringing Ukraine [into NATO's fold](#). Furthermore, the GMF gives funding to American Abroad Media. [AMA](#) boasts of some of the most dangerous anti-Iran neoconservatives who have shaped America's policies such as Dennis Ross, James Woolsey, Martin Indyk (responsible for the Iran-Libya Sanctions Act later to become ISA and still in place after the JCPOA), Tom Pickering (one of the main proponents of the Iran Deal and member of the Iran Project). Supporters are not limited to the GMF. Others include [Rockerfeller, Ford Foundation, and NED](#).

And a most active proponent of the JCPOA was none other than NED recipient, Trita Parsi/NIAC. Trita Parsi was personally thanked for his role in pushing the JCPOA through. Job well done for a 3 time recipient of NED funds. No wonder the George Soros – Koch foundation [Quincy Institute](#) selected him as their Executive Vice President.

And last but not least, Hillary Mann Leverett (wife of aforementioned Flynn Leverett) who persuaded her audiences that the JCPOA was akin to “Nixon going to China”. While some in Iran naively believed this to be the case, and even defended her, they failed to realize that when Nixon went to China it was to bring China on board against Russia. And Israel was not a player. It was not an opening to befriend Iran any more than Nixon's trip had altruist motivations.

Russia and China's role

The Russians and the Chinese were so eager to embrace a long-awaited peace after all the calamity caused by the United States that they fully embraced this Deal, even though it was detrimental to their interests in so doing.

America's animosity and never-ending schemes encouraged cooperation between Russia, China, and Iran. Although the lifting of sanctions post JCPOA would have facilitated trade and enhanced diplomacy between Iran and the West, at a cost to China and Russia, they stood steadfast by the Deal. Peace was more valuable. But far more importantly, the two powerful nations *allowed* the United States to be the arbitrator of an international treaty – the NPT.

During the Shah's reign, President Ford had signed onto a National Security Decision Memorandum ([NSDM 292, 1975](#)) allowing and encouraging Iran to not only enrich uranium, but sell it to neighboring countries to profit America. The United States then decided that since the Islamic Republic of Iran did not serve the interests of the United States, the United States would determine how the NPT should apply to Iran.

But their efforts at peace and the West's efforts at regime change all came to naught. What is important to bear in mind is that America's efforts at war, sabotage, and terrorism have not ended. Imposing unilateral sanctions – terrorism against the Iranian people, has not ceased. Although the Iranian people and their selected representative in the new Iranian

parliament are far more aware of, and have an aversion to America's ploys and the Deal, China and Russia must do their part not only as guarantors of peace, but also to maintain their integrity in a world where both aspire to live in multilateralism. The world already has a super power without morals and integrity; it does not need other great powers that act similarly.

Iran has fended off another assault on its sovereignty. However, saboteurs and terrorists are soliciting war with their recent string of terrorism in Iran. As the fifth anniversary of this trap approaches, the world needs to understand and step up in order to defend peace, international law and social justice. The future of all depends on it.

And to American compatriots: Make sure Trump understands war will not get him re-elected.

*

Note to readers: please click the share buttons above or below. Forward this article to your email lists. Crosspost on your blog site, internet forums. etc.

Soraya Sepahpour-Ulrich is an independent researcher and writer with a focus on U.S. foreign policy and the role of lobby groups in influencing US foreign policy.

The original source of this article is Global Research
Copyright © [Soraya Sepahpour-Ulrich](#), Global Research, 2020

[Comment on Global Research Articles on our Facebook page](#)

[Become a Member of Global Research](#)

Articles by: [Soraya Sepahpour-Ulrich](#)

Disclaimer: The contents of this article are of sole responsibility of the author(s). The Centre for Research on Globalization will not be responsible for any inaccurate or incorrect statement in this article. The Centre of Research on Globalization grants permission to cross-post Global Research articles on community internet sites as long the source and copyright are acknowledged together with a hyperlink to the original Global Research article. For publication of Global Research articles in print or other forms including commercial internet sites, contact: publications@globalresearch.ca
www.globalresearch.ca contains copyrighted material the use of which has not always been specifically authorized by the copyright owner. We are making such material available to our readers under the provisions of "fair use" in an effort to advance a better understanding of political, economic and social issues. The material on this site is distributed without profit to those who have expressed a prior interest in receiving it for research and educational purposes. If you wish to use copyrighted material for purposes other than "fair use" you must request permission from the copyright owner.

For media inquiries: publications@globalresearch.ca