

# My Congressman Is Wrong on Iran, Yours Might Be Too

By [David Swanson](#)

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

Theme: [Militarization and WMD](#)

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

*For the United States to sit and talk and come to an agreement with a nation it has been antagonizing and demonizing since the dictator it installed in 1953 was overthrown in 1979 is historic and, I hope, precedent setting. [Let's seal this deal!](#)*

Four months ago the *Washington Post* [published](#) an op-ed headlined 'War With Iran Is Probably Our Best Option.' It wasn't. Defenders of war present war as a last resort, but when other options are tried the result is never war. We should carry this lesson over to several other parts of the world.

The time has come to remove the "missile defense" weaponry from Europe that was put there under the false pretense of protecting Europe from Iran. With that justification gone, U.S. aggression toward Russia will become damagingly apparent if this step is not taken. And the time has come for the nations that actually have nuclear weapons to join and/or comply with the nonproliferation treaty, which Iran was never actually in violation of.

In addition to the prevention of a massive bombing campaign in Syria that was prevented in 2013, a major recent success in war-lie-preparedness is the holding off, thus far, of a U.S. war on Iran — about which we've been told lies for decades now. The longer this debate goes on, the more it should become clear that there is no urgent emergency that might help justify mass killing. But the longer it goes on, the more some people may accept the idea that whether or not to gratuitously bomb a foreign nation is a perfectly legitimate policy question.

And the argument may also advance in the direction of favoring war for another reason: both sides of the debate promote most of the war lies. Yes, some peace groups are talking perfect sense on this issue as on most, but the debate between Democratic and Republican party loyalists and those in power is as follows. One side argues, quite illegally and barbarically, that because Iran is trying to build a nuclear weapon, Iran should be bombed. The other side argues, counterproductively if in a seemingly civilized manner, that because Iran is trying to build a nuclear weapon, a diplomatic agreement should be reached to put a stop to it. The trouble with both arguments is that they reinforce the false idea that Iran is trying to build a nuclear weapon. As Gareth Porter makes clear in his [book](#) *Manufactured Crisis*, there is no evidence for that.

Both arguments also reinforce the idea that there is something about Iranians that makes them unqualified to have the sort of weapon that it's alright to voluntarily spread to other nations. Of course, I don't actually think it's alright for anyone to have nuclear weapons or nuclear energy, but my point is the bias implicit in these arguments. It feeds the idea that

Iranians are not civilized enough to speak with, even as one-half of the debate pushes for just that: speaking with the Iranians.

On the plus side, much of the push for a war on Iran was devoted for years to demonizing Iran's president until Iran, for its own reasons, elected a different president, which threw a real monkey wrench into the gears of that old standby. Perhaps nations will learn the lesson that changing rulers can help fend off an attack as well as building weapons can. Also on the plus side, the ludicrous idea that Iran is a threat to the United States is very similar to the idea that Iraq was such a threat in 2002-2003. But on the negative side, memory of the Iraq war lies is already fading. Keeping past war lies well-remembered can be our best protection against new wars. Also on the negative side, even if people oppose a war on Iran, several billionaire [fund](#)ers of election campaigns favor one.

Will Congressman Robert Hurt who claims to represent me, and who got Syria right in 2013, commit to taking no funding from those warmongers? Here's what Hurt had to say on Tuesday:

### The Threat of a Nuclear Iran Persists

Dear Friend,

"The long-running nuclear negotiations with Iran and the United States, China, France, Germany, Russia, and the United Kingdom finally reached a head early this morning. Even with the deal reached, I am skeptical that Iran will keep their word, act in good faith, and abide by the terms of the deal.

*The deal is an INSPECTION arrangement, not based in any way on anybody trusting anyone.*

I remain committed to the goal of eliminating Iran's nuclear capabilities because the prospect of Iran attaining the ability to produce a nuclear weapon is a grave threat to the world, and it is a very real possibility that this deal may only fuel Iran's ability to expand its nuclear ambitions and facilitate its efforts to spread terror in the Middle East.

What nuclear ambitions? What terror? This from a Congressman who voted for pulling out U.S. forces on June 17th but has taken no further action and has funded the U.S. operation that is currently killing people in the Middle East?

Iranian leaders clearly remain focused on expanding their nuclear capabilities. They only want to do the bare minimum necessary to lift damaging international economic sanctions that have crippled their economy.

What mindreading feat is this based on? Where's evidence? Haven't we learned to demand it yet?

Iran is the [world's largest state sponsor of terror](#).

Not according to any world source, but rather the U.S. government which defines terrorism to suit its ends. The world [disagrees](#).

The regime makes no secret of its longstanding commitment to see the demise of the United States and Israel, our greatest ally in the Middle East.

Then why don't you point to a single scrap of evidence?

On Saturday, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei spoke about [the need to continue to fight against the "arrogant" U.S.](#) regardless of the outcome of these talks. Allowing Iran to achieve the nuclear capabilities it seeks would pose an existential threat to Israel and the world.

There's nothing there about the demise of the United States or Israel or the slightest evidence of Iran pursuing or threatening to use any weapon. Expecting people to believe otherwise seems a bit — if you'll excuse me — arrogant.

Given Iran's nuclear ambitions and history, I remain unconvinced that Iran will act in good faith and adhere to any of the terms of a deal. Iran has been unwilling to make necessary compromises to meaningfully limit their nuclear program, and there is little reason to believe this will change. Reaching a deal just for the sake of doing so is not worth putting the safety and security of our allies and our country at risk; no deal is better than a dangerous deal.

Again, what ambitions? What history? Why the steady avoidance of documenting any claims? Iran is complying with restrictions not imposed on any other nation. How is that a refusal to compromise?

If this deal is in fact a bad one, the American people have a role to play in this process. In May, the President signed into law [the Iran Nuclear Agreement Review Act](#), which would require congressional review of any final nuclear agreement with Iran before the President can waive or suspend sanctions previously imposed by Congress. Now that an agreement has been reached, Congress has 60 days to review the agreement and pass a joint resolution to approve or disapprove of the deal. Should Congress disapprove the deal, the President would likely veto that measure, but Congress can override the veto with a two-thirds vote.

The American people, in case you hadn't noticed, [favor the deal](#), including a majority of Democrats and a plurality of Republicans.

It is my hope that Congress will carefully consider the consequences of a deal with Iran and maintain its focus on the ultimate goal of eliminating the threat of a nuclear Iran. I remain committed to working with my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to enhance the necessary sanctions against the Iranian regime. We must do everything within our power to prevent Iran from gaining nuclear capabilities.

Is that a proposal for war?

If you need any additional information or if we may be of assistance to you, please visit my website at [hurt.house.gov](http://hurt.house.gov) or call my Washington office: (202) 225-4711, Charlottesville office: (434) 973-9631, Danville office: (434)

[791-2596](tel:791-2596), or Farmville office: [\(434\) 395-0120](tel:434-395-0120).

[Anyone can tell their rep and senators to support the deal here.](#)

*David Swanson is an author, activist, journalist, and radio host. He is director of [WorldBeyondWar.org](http://WorldBeyondWar.org) and campaign coordinator for [RootsAction.org](http://RootsAction.org). Swanson's books include [War Is A Lie](#). He blogs at [DavidSwanson.org](http://DavidSwanson.org) and [WarIsACrime.org](http://WarIsACrime.org). He hosts [Talk Nation Radio](#). He is a [2015 Nobel Peace Prize Nominee](#).*

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