



Rabbinic Recap

The week ending August 7, 2015

IRAN

Iran Already Sanitizing Nuclear Site, Intel Warns

The U.S. intelligence community has informed Congress of evidence that Iran was sanitizing its suspected nuclear military site at Parchin, in broad daylight, days after agreeing to a nuclear deal with world powers. For senior lawmakers in both parties, the evidence calls into question Iran's intention to fully account for the possible military dimensions of its current and past nuclear development. The International Atomic Energy Agency and Iran have a side agreement meant to resolve past suspicions about the Parchin site, and lawmakers' concerns about it has already become a flashpoint because they do not have access to its text. Senate Foreign Relations Committee Chairman Bob Corker told [Bloomberg View](#) Tuesday that while Iran's activity at Parchin last month isn't technically a violation of the agreement it signed with the U.S. and other powers, it does call into question Iran's intention to be forthright about the possible military dimensions of its nuclear program. Democratic Senator Chris Coons, a member of the Foreign Relations Committee, said Tuesday that this area is part of why he is undecided on supporting the Iran deal.

Inspectors So Far Denied Access to Iran's Scientists

Iran so far has refused to allow United Nations inspectors to interview key scientists and military officers to investigate allegations that Tehran maintained a covert nuclear-weapons program, the head of the U.N.'s nuclear watchdog said in an interview Wednesday, reports [The Wall Street Journal](#). The International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) and its director-general, Yukiya Amano, have been trying for more than five years to debrief Mohsen Fakhrizadeh-Mahabadi, an Iranian military officer who the U.S., Israel and IAEA suspect oversaw weaponization work in Tehran until at least 2003. Mr. Amano said Tehran still hasn't agreed to let Mr. Fakhrizadeh or other Iranian military officers and nuclear scientists help the IAEA complete its investigation. The Japanese diplomat [Amano] indicated that he believed his agency could complete its probe even without access to top-level Iranian personnel. Tehran repeatedly has denied it ever had a secret nuclear weapons program. But during an interview in Washington, Mr. Amano said Iran still hasn't agreed to provide access to Mr. Fakhrizadeh or other top Iranian military officers and nuclear scientists to assist the IAEA in completing its probe. Mr. Amano visited Capitol Hill on Wednesday in a bid to assure skeptical U.S. lawmakers the IAEA is capable of implementing a vast inspections regime of Iran's nuclear facilities and clarifying the weaponization issue. Senate Republicans and skeptical Democrats, however, left the 90-minute closed-door meeting frustrated that Mr. Amano refused to share the agency's classified agreements on access to Iranian military sites, scientists and documents.

More Democratic Members of Congress Speak Out Against Iran Deal

On Aug. 4, Reps. Steve Israel (D-NY), Nita Lowey (D-NY) and Ted Deutch (D-FL) voiced their

opposition on the Iran nuclear deal. Rep. Israel, a member of the House Democratic leadership, [claimed](#) the deal was “not good enough” to gain his support. “I believe that Iran is highly likely to exploit ambiguities in the deal. There may not be massive and material violations,” Israel said, “I’m very concerned about lifting the arms embargo. I think it creates pathways to further increase the stockpiles that Hezbollah and Hamas have near Israel...The size, the sophistication, the speed and the illegitimacy of the Iran enrichment capacity in 15 years deeply concerns me.”

[In a press statement](#), Rep. Lowey, the ranking democrat on the House Appropriations Committee, highlighted how a nuclear-capable Iran can spur a nuclear arms race in the Middle East and emphasized flaws in the international inspections regime. “Relieving U.N. sanctions on conventional arms and ballistic missiles and releasing billions of dollars to the Iranian regime could lead to a dangerous regional weapons race and enable Iran to bolster its funding of terrorists,” said Lowey. “The deal does not explicitly require Iran to fully disclose its previous military work to the IAEA’s satisfaction before sanctions relief is provided, and inspectors will not have immediate access to the most suspicious facilities. There are no clear accountability measures regarding punishment for minor violations, which could encourage Iran to cheat.”

[In an op-ed](#) to the Sun Sentinel, Rep. Deutch, the ranking democrat on the House Foreign Affairs Middle East subcommittee, expressed his fears toward an “emboldened” Iran with access to billions of dollars in sanctions relief. “An emboldened Iran was evading weapons inspectors, using the Islamic Revolutionary Guard to launch attacks, and funneling money and missiles to Hamas and Hezbollah,” wrote Deutch. “After a decade in public life working to stop Iran from ever acquiring nuclear weapons, I cannot support a deal giving Iran billions of dollars in sanctions relief – in return for letting it maintain an advanced nuclear program and the infrastructure of a threshold nuclear state.”

New Polls Show that Majority of Americans Oppose Iran Deal

According to a new [Quinnipiac University national poll](#), American voters oppose the nuclear deal with Iran by a 2-1 ratio. The recent poll found that 57 percent of Americans disapprove of the nuclear pact while only 28 percent approve, including “lukewarm support” from Democrats and overwhelming opposition from Republicans and independent voters. The poll also illustrated that 58 percent of American voters believe the proposed nuclear agreement with Iran will make the world less safe, while only 30 percent believe it will make it safer. In a similar [NBC News and Wall Street Journal poll](#), researchers found that opposition to the deal has doubled since June. Seventeen percent of Americans disapproved of the deal according to the June poll, while the new study indicates that 33 percent are against it and 32 percent have not formed an opinion. A July 28 [CNN/ORC](#) poll also found that 52 percent of Americans want Congress to reject the deal.

ISRAEL IN THE NEWS

Israeli Special Olympians bring home medals

Forty Special Olympians, 62 medals—an impressive showing for the team representing Israel at the 2015 World Games in Los Angeles, July 25 to August 2. The Israeli delegation is bringing home 25 gold, 18 silver and 19 bronze medals. With 6,500 athletes and 2,000 coaches representing 165 countries, the 2015 Special Olympics World Games—where athletes with intellectual disabilities compete in 32 Olympic-type sports according to level of prowess—was the largest sports and humanitarian event anywhere in the world this year. Israeli basketball medalist Alec Sommer was one of seven athletes chosen to carry the Special Olympic torch, handed off from an Iranian participant, reports [Israel21c](#).