



Rabbinic Recap

The week ending July 31, 2015

IRAN

House Dem: Iran deal 'simply too dangerous'

A House Democrat on the Foreign Affairs Committee came out against the Iran nuclear deal Wednesday, as the White House seeks to gather Democratic support. According to [The Hill](#), Rep. Grace Meng (N.Y.) said the “deal before us now is simply too dangerous for the American people.” “I strongly believe the world could and should have a better deal than that set forth in the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action, which I will therefore oppose,” said Meng, who is a member of the Foreign Affairs subcommittee on the Middle East. Meng added that she would continue to study the finer points of the deal, but said, “they will not be dispositive for me.” Her remarks come a day after she questioned Secretary of State John Kerry and other top administration officials during a panel hearing on Tuesday. Meng called the inspections procedures “flawed,” and said leading nuclear experts have asserted that inspectors would “not necessarily know” if Iran was manufacturing uranium components for a nuclear weapon. “This is unacceptable,” she said.

Top French Official Contradicts Kerry on Iran Deal

Secretary of State John Kerry has been painting an apocalyptic picture of what would happen if Congress killed the Iran nuclear deal. Among other things, he has warned that “our friends in this effort will desert us.” But the top national security official from one of those nations involved in the negotiations, France, has a totally different view: He told two senior U.S. lawmakers that he thinks a Congressional no vote might actually be helpful. His analysis is already having an effect on how members of Congress, especially House Democrats, are thinking about the deal. The French official, Jacques Audibert, is now the senior diplomatic adviser to President Francois Hollande. Audibert expressed support for the deal overall, but also directly disputed Kerry's claim that a Congressional rejection of the Iran deal would result in the worst of all worlds, the collapse of sanctions and Iran racing to the bomb without restrictions. Earlier this month, he met with Democrat Loretta Sanchez and Republican Mike Turner, both top members of the House Armed Services Committee, to discuss the Iran deal. “He basically said, if Congress votes this down, there will be some saber-rattling and some chaos for a year or two, but in the end nothing will change and Iran will come back to the table to negotiate again and that would be to our advantage,” Sanchez told [Bloomberg View](#) in an interview. “He thought if the Congress voted it down, that we could get a better deal.”

Iran to Build 4 Reactors within a Decade, Nuclear Chief Says

Iran intends to construct at least four new nuclear plants in the country within a decade, the head of Iran's Atomic Energy Organization said on Tuesday. According to [The Times of Israel](#), Ali Akbar Salehi briefed the parliament's National Security and Foreign Policy Committee on the details of the nuclear deal reached with the P5+1 on July 14, known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action. Salehi said that the agreement allows Iran to join an

international “nuclear fuel bank” through which it can sell locally enriched uranium and buy natural uranium in its stead, a process Iran was previously prohibited from undertaking. Emily Landau, an expert on the Iranian nuclear program at the Institute for National Security Studies at Tel Aviv University, said the enriched uranium Salehi is referring to is likely the material Iran must dispose of under the agreement, or the excess uranium Iran is not allowed to keep. “It’s not quite clear in the agreement how Iran is meant to dispose of its uranium,” she said. Iran has also agreed to convert its heavy water nuclear facility in Arak for a period of 15 years. Salehi told parliament that the agreement would allow Iran to renew the plant, which has been operating with “40-year-old Russian technology.” According to Landau, Salehi is trying to domestically market the downgrading of Arak under the agreement as an Iranian negotiating achievement. Inspection of the Parchin military facility, where the nuclear militarization is believed to be handled, has been left secret in the agreement, Landau noted. Rumor has it that the deal allows Iran to itself collect soil samples of the facility and hand them over to inspectors. “That would be like trusting the cat to keep the cream,” she said.

Iran Provision Inserted into Senate Spending Bill

A key provision on Iran attached to the 2016 Senate Subcommittee on Financial Services and General Government spending bill calls on the Treasury Department to review and report on sanctioned Iranian entities’ behavior prior to removing U.S. economic penalties. Authored by Sen. John Boozman (R-AR), the non-binding measure was approved on July 23 by the Senate Appropriations Committee and included in the bill’s accompanying report. The provision requires the Treasury Department, prior to the lifting of sanctions against entities that violated U.S. sanctions, to determine whether the entities continue to engage in prohibited activities. A separate provision requires Treasury to look back at entities 180 days after sanctions are lifted to determine if they have violated the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action or may be subject to other U.S. sanctions. As members of Congress continue to review the proposed nuclear agreement between Iran and the P5+1, the provision’s proponents say this measure will have no impact on Congress’ decision to support or reject the deal. “There’s no effort at all to impinge in any way the talks that are going on,” Boozman said. Sen. Richard Durbin (D-IL), the No. 2 Democrat in the Senate, also backed the provision. “The revised language is acceptable, at least from my point of view,” Durbin said.

ISRAEL IN THE NEWS

Israeli vets save Samuni the Lion

With the story of Cecil the Lion roaring from news media the world over, the almost anonymous Samuni the Lion got a new lease on life thanks to the quick response of Israeli veterinarians. Samuni is an eight-year-old Big Cat living at the Zoological Center of Tel Aviv-Ramat Gan (Safari). During a routine checkup on their charges, the zookeepers at the Safari noticed a large growth on Samuni’s stomach. The beautiful lion was anesthetized so the vets could take a sample of tissue for a biopsy. However, the lab results were inconclusive and the veterinarians decided not to take a chance but instead remove the tumor in its entirety. “Every lion is extremely important for us here at the Safari and we will do everything we can to care for them and give them a quality life,” Sagit Horowitz, Ramat Gan Safari spokesperson, told [ISRAEL21c](#). “There was no doubt that we’d take care of Samuni even though it is extremely difficult to anesthetize a lion. We knew that we would do everything to save his life.” “The story of Cecil is horrifying, shocking and extremely sad,” Horowitz told ISRAEL21c. “It hurts that these things happen.”