

American defeatism, Ukrainian defiance



by Lev Tsitrin

Obama's starting point in negotiating the Iran deal that granted international legitimacy to the Iranian nuclear program in exchange for a 15-year hiatus in making the bomb, was that Iranian bomb was inevitable. He put it into that many words: "we can bomb Iran's nuclear facilities, thereby starting another war in the Middle East, and setting back Iran's program by a few years – in other words, setting it back by a fraction of the time that this deal will set it back. Meanwhile we'd ensure that Iran would race ahead to try and build a bomb."

Since Iranian atom bomb was inevitable, why try stop it? According to Obama, an attempt to do so would cause a war – but that war would be futile, and the ayatollahs would get a bomb anyway. Not going to war would result in Iran's atom bomb, going to war would result in Iran's atom bomb – so if we cannot avoid Iran's atom bomb, let us at least avoid the war. That was Obama's logic. Accordingly, the JCP0A, as the 2015

Iran deal became known, was to act as an off-ramp for the option of American military intervention in Iran's nuclear program. The Iran "deal" operated on the exact same principle as legalizing marijuana: the jails are full, drug-dealing is unstoppable – so "make it legal!"

Needless to say, for the sake of public relations the negotiations had to be conducted under the banner of stopping Iran's march towards the bomb – but only those willing to be duped were duped. Even the choice of Wendy Sherman as chief negotiator, who knew better than anyone after negotiating the de-nuclearization of North Korea that resulted in dozens of North Korean nuclear warheads that as a tool of preventing Iran from getting the bomb, the deal would be futile, its only outcome being the removal of international response (by removing the responsibility to act) when Iran started to legally enrich uranium all it wants, was a clear signal of Obama's defeatist intentions. What Obama wanted, was for America to say in 2030: "well, what was illegal then, requiring our intervention, is legal now, and there is no legal reason for us to intervene." Or, "better bomb than bombing" – per snappy slogan of the Iranian lobby.

This is exactly why Biden is desperately trying to resurrect the "deal" – not because it prevents Iran bomb (it does no such thing) – but to be able to shrug his shoulders when Iran decides to race for the bomb, and say "well, we did what we could. At least, we avoided the war."

Exactly the same logic applies to Russian invasion of Ukraine. Russia deployed an overwhelming force, we are told by the military experts, and sooner or later Putin will attain his goal of conquering Ukraine. So, the real choice is between having death, destruction, and Russian domination – or having Russian domination alone, without the death and destruction. The clear, rational choice that Putin presented to the Ukrainians was this: if you resist being swallowed by us, we will swallow you!

Yet, Ukrainians chose not to listen to the calm and rational voice of defeatist reason. Instead, they chose to fight – and their fighting spirit inspired America and Europe to arm them, and to pile sanctions on Russia, making the outcome far less than certain.

It is highly doubtful that Obama the defeatist would have gone for such measures – seeing the writing on the wall, he would have backed off from backing up the supposedly lost cause in Ukraine, just as he refused to support Iranians protesting the regime of the ayatollahs in 2009, and made sure that they can have an atom bomb by orchestrating the defeatist JCPOA of 2015. In fact, he backed off from serious sanctions on Russia after its takeover of Crimea in 2014.

When it comes to the Iran “deal,” which Biden is so eager to come back to, the Arabs and the Israelis are the new Ukrainians. The latest report is, that Saudis and Emiratis, sensing the oil leverage they now have, refuse to take Biden’s calls. Clearly, Biden wants them to ramp up their oil production to offset the loss of Russian oil – but they have their price: support us in Yemen, and stop America’s insane re-entry into the JCPOA. (I’d add that we should start fighting Iran’s Islamist ideology itself – it is extremely vulnerable, given that it is as impossible for anyone to know whether God talked to Mohammed and whether Koran is God’s word, as it is to square the circle. Iran’s clerical regime is, in religious terms, idolatrous – and hence, illegitimate. It can be brought down by reason alone.)

We’ll see how it all ends – but the lesson is clear: defeatism and surrender may be wise, and resistance may be foolish – but one has no choice but to choose resistance. There has to be a hope – and surrender means abandonment of hope; hence, surrender is insufferable. Living like a dog is better than dying like a lion, the saying goes – except that there is no guarantee that the lion will die in the battle. Swapping the life of a lion for a life of a dog, swapping liberty for

slavery because those are wiser choices? Well, those are Obama's choices, this is Obama's wisdom. Ukrainians rejected it. When it comes to the Iran "deal," Americans should reject it, too.