

**‘Everybody knows.’ Except for the New York Times. And the diplomats.**



“Everybody knows,” runs a refrain in Leonard Cohen’s eponymous song packed with cynical lyrics.

“Everybody knows that the deal is rotten” is one of the lines. I doubt that it was written with foresight of Obama’s 2015 nuclear “deal” with Iran, the “deal” that, in exchange for a promise of a 15-year hiatus in Iran’s development of a nuclear weapon, granted international legality to its nuclear project. Yet, “everybody knows that the deal is rotten” fits the JCPOA perfectly, as if custom-made for it. When the UN imposed sanctions on Iran for its nuclear work, Mr. Obama, instead of telling the ayatollahs, “look guys, your nuclear project has to be dismantled, one way or the other. Here is your choice:

do it yourself in a clearly-verifiable manner, and rejoin the world's economy; or else we will dismantle it for you, but you will stay a pariah, under continued economic sanctions," moved his goalposts. Rather than denying Iran the ability to develop nuclear weapons, Obama's goal became avoiding a conflict with Iran – so he came up with the Iran "deal" that lifted UN sanctions and gave Iran the ability to legally engage in full-blown nuclear development starting in 2030. The "deal" ignored Iran's past attempts at weaponization, accepting the ayatollahs' assurances that such attempts were never made – but threatened to "snap back" the UN sanctions if Iran were to violate its obligations under the "deal."

Everybody knows what happened since. Israelis managed to smuggle out of Iran its nuclear archive – which showed beyond the shadow of doubt that, despite its vehement denials, Iran did engage in nuclear weapons work in the past – some of it, in the previously undisclosed sites. Upon reviewing the intelligence, President Trump withdrew the US from that clearly-rotten "deal" in 2018.

Everybody knows that Iran started violating the terms of the deal – it raised the purity level from the 3.67% allowed by JCPOA first to 20%, and then to 60%; it started using faster, more advanced centrifuges than those allowed after the JCPOA; it started producing uranium metal that is used in the bomb. It started denying access to monitoring equipment.

Everybody knows that the threat of "snap back" of UN sanctions proved to be utterly bogus – each and every one of those violations should have triggered the "snap back" – but somehow didn't.

Everybody knows by now – that is, those who cared to read the headline ["Senior European diplomats warn of risk to nuclear talks if Iran enriches uranium to weapons grade"](#) – that the terms of the "deal" moved yet again – from "do not enrich beyond 3.67% – or else we'll snap back sanction, or more!" to

“please don’t enrich to 90% – it might make us upset.” Those “Senior European diplomats” are of course perfectly right – once Iran gets to the point where it has a bomb, further negotiations will be futile. Not that they notice the irony of it being their own fault – a result of not having the spine to “snap back” the UN sanctions, as they were supposed to per the very JCPOA they say they try to protect. This also falls under the “everybody knows” rubric, of course – after all, as diplomats they are well-trained to not see what they don’t want to see – like Iran’s nuclear violations that, per JCPOA, deserved snapping back of UN sanctions at least a year ago – but due to the highly selective political vision of the “Senior European diplomats,” were not noticed, though “everybody knows.”

“Everybody knows that the deal is rotten” does not apply to the *New York Times* either, for it treated us to Rodger Friedman’s monumentally ridiculous piece titled [“Trump’s Iran Policy Has Become a Disaster for the U.S. and Israel,”](#) no less. Mr. Friedman prefers to avert his glance from the fact that the deal worked exactly as designed by Mr. Obama. Only one aspect of Obama’s plan went awry: the timing. Everything else worked out exactly as Mr. Obama planned. By getting into the deal, Mr. Obama intended to buy the time for his own, and the following administration (which he expected to be Hillary Clinton’s), so they didn’t have to deal with Iran. He clearly tried to throw this problem into Republicans’ lap – I would guess following Louis XIV’s famous dictum, “after us, flood!” That part did not work out too well – because the massive ramping-up of Iran’s nuclear project which Mr. Obama thought would be happening in 2030, is happening in 2021. What Iran was supposed to be doing legally, in accordance with JCPOA, (the world merely saying with a sigh, “well, we did all we could; it is just too bad!” or, as a Russian politician put it a while back, “we hoped for the best, but things worked out the way they always do”), Iran is doing illegally, right now. What the Republicans were supposed to be faced with in the

future – having no legal options but to acquiesce and take the blame, is happening right now. That's all there is to it, Mr. Friedman and the *New York Times* – Mr. Obama's chickens came home to roost nine years sooner than he planned, not during a Republican administration as he hoped, but during the Democratic one, not when Iran's nuclear effort became legal due to JCPOA, but while it is still illegal under that same framework..

“Everybody knows” that this rotten deal worked out exactly the way it was supposed to – everybody except for the *New York Times*, and the “Senior European diplomats.” And they likely know, too – but just like everyone in Leonard Cohen's song, they want to pretend that they don't.

“Everybody knows” – but the question is, would that knowledge help end the Obama's, and Iran's, madness?