

Uproar over Iran Nuclear Program at the Jerusalem Post 2015 Annual Conference



It is not often that Obama Cabinet secretaries get booed and jeered by American Jewish activists in public for presenting the Administration's case for a possible P5+1 deal with Iran's nuclear program. Former Israeli Security officials were publicly accused of undermining military action ordered by Israeli PM Netanyahu's Security Cabinet in 2010 against Iran's nuclear facilities. But that is exactly what occurred at the Marquis Marriott in Midtown Manhattan Sunday June 7, 2015 at the annual *Jerusalem Post* Conference. Former New York Mayor Rudi Giuliani, who also spoke on the Iran nuclear agreement issue at the Conference, told the audience, "You would have to be stupid not to be worried by a nuclear Iran," run by Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, who is dedicated to Israel's destruction. Further he suggested that Iran's nuclear program was a more important security issue than the Islamic State.

Obama Treasury Secretary Jacob Lew endeavored to give the audience the Administration's position on the possible P5+1 agreement with Iran that may emerge for Congressional review in 22 days. His speech was frequently disrupted by boos and jeers jarring him, despite requests by *Jerusalem Post* editor in chief Steve Linde to respect Lew and let him speak. *The Jerusalem Post* [reported](#) Lew telling the crowd, "I would only ask that you listen to me as we listen to you." A colleague, Professor Jay Bergman, Professor of Russian History at Central Connecticut State University, who attending the conference and witnessed the uproar reported,

I turned my chair and faced the rear while Lew was speaking – the way NYC cops did to de Blasio last winter.

I'd say about 1/3 of the audience booed Lew and jeered him repeatedly for the duration of his speech.

You can read the text of Lew's speech [here](#).

The Algemeiner [reported](#):

U.S. Secretary of the Treasury Jack Lew faced a booing and jeering crowd on Sunday at the annual *Jerusalem Post* conference in New York.

As the Treasury secretary discussed the Obama administration's commitment to Israeli security, the audience erupted into boos, with some laughing.

As Lew broached the topic of the current framework for a deal with Iran to contain its nuclear program, somebody called out "Chamberlain," referring to the British prime minister who pursued a policy of appeasement with the Nazi regime in the years leading up to World War II.

At one point, *The Jerusalem Post's* Editor-in-Chief Steve Linde took to the microphone urging audience members to quiet down, and calling the heckling "disrespectful."

"I only ask that you listen to me as we've listened to you," said a slightly flustered Lew, following his hostile reception from an audience about two-thirds full, at the Marriott Marquis events hall.

Lew went on to rebuff a recent report by the *New York Times* stating that Iran's nuclear fuel stockpiles had gone up since signing an interim agreement in 2013, supposedly freezing its fuel production. Lew said the fluctuations were normal and expected.

He said Russia and China would not have veto power at the

U.N. over the automatic “snap back” of sanctions should Iran be found to be cheating on the comprehensive nuclear deal, which faces a June 30 deadline.

Russia had previously said it would reject any “automaticity” in reimposing sanctions should inspectors discover Iran’s cheating on a nuclear deal, and many critics of the emerging agreement have insisted an international sanctions regime would be near-impossible to re-enforce once the current sanctions are lifted.

Additionally, the secretary of the treasury said the U.S. would continue to go after individuals and interests from Iran supporting terrorist activities in the Middle East.

Following Lew’s address, Israeli Infrastructure, Energy and Water Minister Yuval Steinitz attempted to simmer tensions by thanking Lew for his efforts to secure a spot for Israel in the elite Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development when he was Deputy Secretary of State.

Steinitz remarked, however, that under the current framework agreement, the details of which were announced in Lausanne, Switzerland in April, Iran might be able to reduce its breakout time for a nuclear weapon from 12 months to six months.

[Watch](#) this JPostTv YouTube video of Treasury Secretary Lew speech at the Jerusalem Post Annual Post conference amidst boos and jeers by audience members:

If that wasn’t enough pushback, there was the confrontation by *Jerusalem Post* columnist Carolyn Glick of former Mossad Chief Meir Dagan and IDF chief of Staff Gabi Ashkenazi over the alleged refusal to honor an order by the security cabinet of

Israeli Pm Netanyahu in 2010, because as Dagan contested, "it was an illegal order". *Israel Matsav* [commented on](#) his blog:

The exchange was:

"In 2010, according to a report from 2012 on the Israeli news program Uvda, we learned that two of the men on this panel were given an order to prepare a strike against Iran's military installations and they refused," Glick said.

"Because it was an illegal order," Dagan interjected.

"You were ordered by the security cabinet," Glick said.

"You don't know what happened there," Dagan answered.

"It is not in your expert legal opinion to determine whether or not the prime minister of Israel and defense minister of Israel have a right to order Israel to take action in its national defense. We would not be where we are today. We would not now be faced with a situation where no international coalition will be built, where now we are seeing the United States moving forward at the end of the month to conclude a nuclear agreement with Tehran that will enable them to acquire the bomb. We would be in a different position," Glick charged.

Ashkenazi said that what Glick was saying was "stupid," later apologizing and saying he meant "insulting." He rejected the idea that the military echelon could prevent the political echelon from attacking Iran.

[Watch](#) the JPostTV YouTube video of the Glick-Dagan-Ashkenazi exchange: