

THE BROOKINGS INSTITUTION

IRAN-P5+1 NUCLEAR NEGOTIATIONS:
THE ROAD AHEAD

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P R O C E E D I N G S

MR. EINHORN: I am Robert Einhorn from the Brookings Institution. I'd like to welcome you to this panel discussion on the Iranian nuclear program and on recent developments in the last few days in Vienna. And as you I'm sure all know yesterday in Vienna Iran and the P5+1 countries reached an agreement to extend the nuclear negotiations for a second time. They agreed to seek a political arrangement, a political agreement within about four months, and they agreed to try to finalize the details of any political agreement within seven months or approximately by late June. During this period the interim arrangements that were worked out in November 2013 will remain in place. These are the arrangements under a deal called the Joint Plan of Action. And so Iran's nuclear program will remain frozen in all critical respects and the modest sanctions relief that was agreed back in November 2013 will continue, including the incremental repatriation of a small amount of restricted oil revenues that have been held up in restricted banks mostly in Asia. But during this period the most impactful of the economic sanctions, those on banking and oil, will remain in place.

Secretary of State John Kerry had a press event yesterday in Vienna and the Secretary made the case for an extension of the negotiations. He said that real and substantial progress had been made even in the past several days, new ideas had been put on the table. What he was indicating was that for the first time in a while there was some momentum in the negotiations. The talks were not dead in the water. And I'll quote him, he said, "We now see the path toward potentially resolving some issues that have been intractable." He went on to elaborate how the interim deal had constrained Iran's nuclear program and said that as a result the world was safer today than it was one year ago. He indicated based on reports by the International Atomic Energy Agency that Iran had complied with its obligations under the interim deal. He pointed out that the

most powerful sanctions remained in place and that they provided continuing incentives for Iran to come to terms on a comprehensive agreement. In general he made the case that a continuation of the interim deal was very much in the interest of the United States. And he said that considering how far we had come in a year, and given the potential for reaching a comprehensive deal over the next several months it would have been a terrible mistake to walk away from the negotiations by the time of the November 24 deadline. Other parties in the talks have expressed similar views. President Rouhani, President of Iran indicated yesterday that he was more or less pleased with the extension. He expressed confidence that a comprehensive deal could be concluded he said sooner or later. Other U.S. partners in the P5+1 expressed similar views. And even the Israelis expressed relief that a hasty, ill conceived agreement had not been reached. And they seemed content with a continuation of the interim deal, at least for the time being.

But at the same time while indicating that progress had been achieved Secretary Kerry was very frank in indicating that significant gaps remained in the negotiations, and gaps not on secondary issues, but gaps on some of the fundamental issues. And he made it clear that he considered success to be far from inevitable. And subsequently administration spokesmen have noted that while Iranian negotiators had demonstrated some greater flexibility than they had previously demonstrated that Iran had yet to demonstrate the realism required to close a deal. Anticipating critics on Capitol Hill, former colleagues of his on Capitol Hill, Secretary Kerry called on them, critics on the Hill, to give the Obama administration the benefit of the doubt and to hold off on additional sanctions. The White House spokesman reiterated this believe that additional sanctions would not be necessary, would not be helpful, and in fact could be disruptive of the further negotiating process. Congressional reactions have been mixed

so far. Some have indicated that they are prepared to give the Obama administration the benefit of the doubt and to hold off. Others have indicated that no deal has been achieved in a year, if we have any hope of achieving a deal over the next several months it's important that we obtain additional leverage and we can only do that by enacting additional sanctions legislation. And they're calling in the new Congress, perhaps even in the lame duck session but more likely in the new Congress where republicans control the Senate, for the imposition of additional sanctions.

So what is the outlook for the period ahead, what is the likelihood that in these coming months a comprehensive deal will be achieved, what are the gaps that need to be closed, what kind of deal would be in the best interest of the United States and of its partners in the Middle East, how will the new Congress react to the extension, how will the Obama administration respond to calls on the Hill for additional sanctions, and what will be the outcome of this potential clash between the Executive Branch and the Legislative Branches?

We have an excellent panel today to provide answers to these questions. We have on my right Gary Samore, who is Executive Director for Research at Harvard's Belfer Center. Gary until a while ago was the most senior White House official responsible for weapons of mass destruction, was intimately involved in the Iran negotiations. To my immediate left is David Albright who you know is founder and head of the Institute for Science and International Security, ISIS -- not the other ISIS, but (laughter) the good ISIS. As you all know it's the go to place to understand the technical side of the Iranian issue as well as many other issues. We're happy to have David with us. We also have Ed Levine whom I've known for many, many years. Ed is a former Senior Staff Member of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. He knows the Hill and how the Hill approaches these sanctions issues better than almost anybody else. So I'm

delighted that Ed is joining us today.

So without further ado I'm going to ask each of the panelists to make some opening remarks. I may then ask a few questions, provide a few comments of my own, and then we'll open it up to the audience because I know you have many, many questions. So, Gary, why don't you start off?

MR. SAMORE: Thanks, Bob, and thanks everybody for coming today. The first thing I want to do is to compliment Secretary Kerry and his negotiating team for managing a very difficult and complicated negotiation which has included maintaining unity within the P5+1 where there are some very different views. It involves consoling our nervous Middle East allies, and most difficult of all it involves direct negotiations with the Iranians. Now the failure to reach an agreement over this weekend is entirely Iran's fault. I think it's very important to understand that the U.S. through the P5+1 put forward a very reasonable even generous offer that would have allowed Iran to retain a limited enrichment capacity and eventually build up to a larger capacity as part of its nuclear power program, and to defer coming to terms with the IAEA on the question of Iran's past weaponization activities. All of this in exchange for graduated sanctions relief. But the Iranians as far as I can tell have continued to take unrealistic and extreme positions. They refuse to give up a single one of their current operating centrifuges, they insist on a rapid build up to a much larger enrichment capacity, and they insist on total and immediate sanctions relief.

Now maybe this is just shock bargaining tactics. Maybe as we near the new deadline we'll begin to see the Iranians recognize that they need to show some more flexibility and they'll actually come forward with some changes in these unrealistic positions. But the other possibility which I fear may be true is that Supreme Leader Khamenei just does not feel compelled to make fundamental concessions in giving up or

limiting Iran's efforts to acquire a nuclear weapons capability. Because in his view the Iranian economy is stabilized under the Joint Plan of Action and under President Rouhani's much more effective economic team. And Supreme Leader Khamenei may believe that geopolitical developments like the Ukraine crisis and the rise of ISIS gives Iran a much stronger bargaining position and makes it more able to withstand the consequences if the joint Plan of Action collapses. If that's the case in seven months we'll be exactly where we are today.

So what can we do to put pressure or persuade Khamenei to actually negotiate and change some of these extreme positions? Well, one thing I think is for the P5+1 not to offer any new proposals until the Iranians make a serious counter proposal. I'm sure that our negotiating team understands that. Second, I think we need to begin to talk to our allies, both oil consumers and oil producers, about the need to prepare for the possibility that the Joint Plan of Action may collapse and we will want them in the case of oil consumers like Japan, Korea, India, we will want them to continue past efforts to reduce purchases of oil from Iran, and we'll want oil producers like the Saudis and the Emirates to maintain high production so there's alternative supplies available. The Iranians of course will know that we're beginning to make these preparations and that may help to persuade them that they need to make concessions. Now we need to recognize I think that getting Russia and China on board with an end to these negotiations and a return to sanctions is going to be very challenging, probably not possible, especially in the context of Ukraine. But up to now the most important sanctions, the ones that really bite, are the ones that they U.S. and its allies have imposed. And I think we need to begin making preparations should it become necessary to go back to the sanctions track. And third I'd like to see the White House and Congress work on legislation that would increase U.S. leverage by authorizing the President to

impose new sanctions without at the same time giving the Iranians an excuse to walk away from the talks and blame the United States. And Ed of course is going to talk about this in more detail.

Now will this work? I honestly don't know. It may be that Supreme Leader Khamenei is just determined not to budge. And in that case I think the prospect for extending the Joint Plan of Action past July is going to become very, very difficult. And that would be unfortunate; that would return us to the status quo ante where presumably Iran would resume all the nuclear activities that it has frozen, the U.S. would resume its sanctions campaign. And I think we have to accept and recognize that even if we resume the sanctions campaign this is not going to immediately force Iran to capitulate. Maybe over time it will increase the pressure and Iran may come back to the bargaining table, but in the meantime they'll be creeping forward with their nuclear program. I don't think Iran is close to getting nuclear weapons because I think their options are constrained by the fear that it would provoke a military attack, but they can begin to build up their stockpiles of centrifuges and low enriched uranium and so forth. I don't think the U.S. is close to attacking Iran or even Israel as long as they continue to observe these constraints. But a collapse of the Joint Plan of Action is obviously not in our interests. I think our best chance of keeping it going is to show Iran that if necessary we're prepared to go back to the sanctions campaign.

MR. EINHORN: Thank you very much, Gary. Now perhaps, David, you can focus on some of the remaining gaps in the negotiations and what might be required to close those gaps. What would make a deal a good deal?

MR. ALBRIGHT: Okay. Yeah, I think I'd first like to say I agree with Gary. I mean in the sense that Iran has not been willing to make the concessions and the U.S. has been willing to I think in some cases go too far, and I'll talk a little bit about

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that, in order to try to find an acceptable deal. And I think unfortunately that was true in July. I was in Vienna at the end of the negotiations. Iran was not willing to make the concessions there, so we didn't seem to have the kind of instructions that would allow a flexibility on these negotiations. The same appears to be true over the last weekend. And so I don't know what it's going to take, but I think from my technical point of view it's going to require a very high level political decision in Iran in order for this to work.

Now what I'd like to do is as Bob suggested, just go through some of the particular provisions in any deal, but I'd like to first start with the interim deal itself. We've been scrutinizing the IAEA reports very carefully for years and it became apparent to us about a month ago with the last IAEA report that there's a little bit of fraying on the edges of the concessions Iran's made on the interim deal. I mean they started enriching in IR5. You know, lawyers can debate whether it's a violation. I mean I think at my group ISIS we would say it's certainly Iran pushing against the envelope, or it's a loophole in the deal. And I think the current negotiations on an interim deal that -- I don't know if they're finished or not -- would be that there has to be better defined centrifuge R & D limitations in the interim deal. These things need to be clarified.

I think it also makes sense that there's more blending down of 20 percent, or that as pioneered in the July deal that more 20 percent ends up in the fuel for the research reactor. Again that hasn't gone that well as expected. I expected the deal would have 25 kilograms of 20 percent enriched uranium in the actual fuel assemblies. It's not much more than five kilograms because the ambiguities and what it means to use the twenty percent in the fuel assemblies, it turns out a lot doesn't end up in the fuel assemblies. So I think that's another thing where you could strengthen the constraints on the program through the concessions Iran would make in this interim deal to get the \$700 million a month.

Now on the PMD or sort of the core issues of did Iran have a nuclear weapons program, are parts of that program possibly continuing, will Iran build nuclear weapons in the future. I think I was a little disappointed in this idea that these things can be deferred. And to be fair they would be linked to sanctions relief. Iran wouldn't be given a pass; they would have to settle the issues. And I think that's what I've always heard is the U.S. position, Iran would have to satisfy the concerns for IAEA on these issue in order to get sanctions relief, but in a sense it would be deferred. And I think now that we have seven months I think it's important to return to the position that Iran should satisfy the IAEA's concerns before there is a deal. And I think it's very hard to argue that seven months isn't enough. And I would say it's dangerous now to do that. I mean I followed the IAEA activities, I worked with them during the Iraq inspections in the '90s and history matters. You have to know the history in order to know what's going on now. And I think that's true in any area. You're going to be very limited in your ability to understand what's going on if you just turn your back on the history. But it's more important in this case because the IAEA suspects some of these activities may possibly be ongoing. So it's not just a history question, it's a question of what could be happening today. And it gets right to the issue of verifiability of this deal. If the IAEA's concerns aren't addressed one of the things Iran would learn is it can stonewall the IAEA and get the P5+1 to cave. And that's going to undermine the IAEA's credibility, and yet the IAEA is going to be the principal mechanism to verify on any long-term deal. And so it doesn't make sense to undermine their credibility and in a sense encourage Iran to defy the IAEA after a deal is signed. So I think with seven months there's plenty of time to settle this, but I do think it's going to require a very high level decision in Iran to do that.

Now on some of the other issues that are well publicized, I mean it is well known they differ on the number of centrifuges. Creative ideas to ship LEU out of Iran,

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reduce the stocks, but I don't think there's been an agreement on how far the stocks would be reduced. I mean they have an impact to in a sense strengthen the limits on centrifuge numbers. You've got to drive those numbers from seven or so tons of three and a half percent LEU down to a few hundred kilograms. And I don't think that by means has been settled. And also the primary goal has to remain getting the number of centrifuges down. And the U.S. has put on the table it's willing to consider 4500 IR1 centrifuges staying. I mean that's not that far from our position as we've stated since last January, but U.S. wants to strengthen that by then having the LEU stocks come down significantly. And I think it would strengthen it significantly. So it's a very important part of this.

Another is what's going to happen to the centrifuges that would be declared excess. Iran has rejected their dismantlement and destruction so how do you deal with it if it's 4000 centrifuges that are enriching, you're talking about 15,000 IR1s and IR2Ms that stay in place. And so how do you make sure those can't be operated or restarted quickly. And that remains a difficult technical issue among experts and we don't have a good answer if you want Iran to need six months or more to restart them. And I don't think the U.S. has a good answer. And Iran doesn't seem to be willing to be able to go down the path to discuss that in much detail.

So I think there's quite a few issues, and let me just end on the verification side. The IAEA is going to not only have to have its credibility in tact it's going to have to be doing a lot more than it would normally do. Iran has been 20 years in non compliance with its safeguards obligations and in those cases the IAEA has to do more to assure that there's -- I think used the term, "the absence of undeclared activities or facilities." And on those issues they're well defined what's needed and Iran has also not been so willing to engage on these measures that would be supplementary to what's

called the additional protocol.

So let me stop here.

MR. EINHORN: Okay. Thank you. Ed, the congressional angle?

MR. LEVINE: The members of Congress probably approach this issue roughly the way you have heard the first two speakers approach it, with a fair amount of concern, sometimes cynicism, not really believing that Iran in the end will choose to make a deal. But they have a problem; the problem that members of Congress face is that their options for legislation aren't very good either. And so if you look at most of the proposals that have been made in the last year or so they've died in subcommittee. They haven't even gotten to full committee even on the House side under republican control. So when you hear people say that Harry Reid has bottled up sanctions, don't believe it. Everybody has bottled up sanctions bills. And the reason they bottle them up is that the bills that have been put forward have been killer legislation rather than really helpful legislation. It's very difficult to be really helpful and it's much easier and gets much better publicity to come out and say we need to have the Iranians end all enrichment. We need to destroy or dismantle all of their illicit infrastructure. Well, if you could get a complete surrender on these issues by Iran that would be very nice, it's just that nobody, literally nobody is predicting that Iran is going to do that. And so if you want a piece of legislation that would help our negotiators rather than antagonizing our allies and ending the negotiations, you have to come up with something else. It isn't easy as I say.

One other type of proposal that has been made in the past and you can expect to see more of these in the future is a requirement that any agreement with Iran survive a process similar to that which is used for arms sales or peaceful nuclear cooperation agreements under which Congress would have the ability to pass a resolution of disapproval. Now you might ask can't they always do that and the answer is

yeah, they can always do that. The difference is that under those other two bodies of law Congress sets up expedited procedures so that they actually can get a vote on a resolution of disapproval and they don't allow implementation of an agreement to begin until Congress has had 30 or 60 days in which to try to pass one of those resolutions. Of course such resolutions can be vetoed and so Congress would still need to have a two thirds majority in both houses in order to impose its will on the President, but you could imagine giving continued Iranian unwillingness to compromise that eventually they would get that two thirds majority if they had something good to propose.

So what is it that they could propose that might actually be useful? And here I'm talking only for myself. I may talk with others but I haven't found others willing to get down to this level of detail just as perhaps our negotiators haven't found the Iranians willing to get down to this level of detail. You could imagine a sanctions bill that was tailored to what we're offering so that the bill would say we won't invoke more sanctions unless we cannot get some of the things we're willing to sign a deal on with Iran. That would be a very difficult piece of legislation for Congress because it would involve giving up on more maximalist goals. But it could help the negotiations if we backed up our negotiators to the extent that they could say here is how far we can go and we can implement a deal that goes this far, but if it goes further we may not be able to get Congress to support it. Right now our negotiators are able to say that in principle, you could imagine legislation that would enable to say that more precisely. The problem with that legislation would be that it assumes Iran wants a deal. If Iran doesn't know whether it wants a deal then all of that legislation won't do much good, but it's a possibility.

Other possibilities, you can beef up verification, you can give more help to the IAEA, you can give more direction to U.S. intelligence and other agencies, you can set up reporting requirements that require the Executive Branch to report to Congress on

a regular basis what's going on, you can set up exceptional reporting requirements that say if Iran does X the administration has to report to congress on what it's done, what we're doing about it, and why we shouldn't give up and just cut off the money that's going to Iran. There are precedents for legislation of that sort largely in the realm of resolutions of advice and consent to arms control treaties. So Congress knows how to write provisions of that sort if it wants to.

Beyond that you could the President -- and here I'm stealing from Gary -- you could give the President more sanctions authority without necessarily requiring him to use it. And so you would give him more swords to hang over people's heads, but it would still be up to him whether to cut the hair.

So there are things you could do. I don't think either in Congress or in the administration anybody has sat down and said let's work together on what we could come up with. I think it would be very interesting as a staff exercise to have them work on that and see if they could come up with good legislation that might be enacted sometime in the spring time. My friends tell me that they don't expect anything to happen in the lame duck session, so we are looking at next year rather than the end of this year.

I'll stop for now.

MR. EINHORN: Thank you very much, Ed. I'm going to ask a couple of questions and then we're going to open it up to the audience. First I agree with Gary that the main reason we don't have a deal yet or even the outlines of a deal is because Iran has taken a rigid position, an unrealistic position. It hasn't been prepared to reduce its operational enrichment capacity and it's insisted on, you know, very early lifting of sanctions before it has even demonstrated compliance with its obligations to the satisfaction of the IAEA. And I agree with him also on some of the reasons why they haven't showed much flexibility. Perhaps they believe that the Obama administration

needed them on regional issues to defeat ISIS, perhaps they thought the President was in a weak position, perhaps they thought they could muddle through with their economy, a number of reason. But it's interesting that Secretary Kerry has indicated that he's seen some movement now, that there seems to have been a difference. I wonder what you think, Gary, what's the likelihood that President Rouhani and his negotiators will go to the Supreme Leader and say look, boss, this hasn't worked. The Americans are not going to cave. We need to show greater flexibility. Do you think the domestic politics in Iran would permit that?

MR. SAMORE: Well, that's really the key question because it is the Supreme Leader that is giving the instructions to his negotiating team. And it was his public red lines that Iran won't give up any of their existing capacity and insists on building up to 190,000 SWU, that's like 20 times what they currently have buy 2021, which his negotiators are operating with. So you're not going to get a deal unless the Supreme Leader authorizes more flexibility to Foreign Minister Zarif. And, you know, it's hard to -- I mean obviously the Supreme Leader hasn't whispered in my ear what his views are, but I believe based on, you now, Iran's behavior over the last couple of decades, since Khamenei has been Supreme Leader that he's deeply committed to acquiring a nuclear weapons capability, both because he sees that as necessary to defend Iran against enemies, like the Great Satan, and as well to assert Iran's dominance in the region and its ability to intimidate its neighbors. But at the same time Khamenei has shown sensitivity to the risks of pursuing a nuclear weapons program. And we know from history that when the threat and risk has been high enough he's been prepared to accept limits. So he froze most of the enrichment program for two years in 2003 after the U.S. invaded Iraq and Afghanistan and didn't unfreeze the program until it became clear that the U.S. was bogged down in both theatres, and he calculated, Khamenei calculated

that Iran was safe to resume.

Most recently I think President Obama's sanctions campaign has been very effective in compelling Iran to at least accept a freeze even though they haven't been willing to make more fundamental sacrifices. So it really comes down to Supreme Leader Khamenei's calculation of what the balance of power is. I'm sure that Rouhani and Zarif would very much like a deal. President Rouhani campaigned on getting the sanctions lifted. And if they recognize that the only way to get the sanctions lifted is to meet some of the American demands they're going to make that case to Khamenei. But Khamenei is also being lobbied by the IRGC and hard liners who will say we don't need to make these concessions. The Americans are weak, we're strong, we can afford to stand firm. And, you know, up to now the Supreme Leader has tended to side with those hard liners. So we'll have to wait and see what happens in seven months. My main argument is to the extent that we can influence Khamenei's calculation I think we have to convince him that we're prepared to walk away from these negotiations, go back to sanctions.

MR. EINHORN 37:42:) Gary's answer touches on an issue that I'd like to comment on briefly and that's the issue of whether Iran is bound and determined to have nuclear weapons, to build nuclear weapons. I think it's clear that at least until 2003 they had a -- what the IAEA calls a structured program to do experimentation, procurement research directed at the design of a nuclear weapon. But something happened in 2003 and I think we have pretty good information, the IAEA does, that they suspended a critical element of that, the weaponization component, the actual design of a nuclear explosive device. And the U.S. intelligence community has held ever since then that while Iran has insisted on keeping open the option to acquire nuclear weapons it has not yet made a decision to proceed. My own view is that it is not inevitable that

Iran will make that decision to go for nuclear weapons and I think the purpose of an agreement needs to be to deter any future decision by Iran's leaders to make that choice, to decide to go from a capability which they have and will never get rid of, to the actual acquisition of nuclear weapons. And I think an agreement can do that by making the process of acquiring nuclear weapons very lengthy, increasing the break out time, making it very detectable by having very good monitoring arrangements, and making it very risky, by making it very clear that if they are caught breaking out of an agreement they will pay a very high price. So in my view an Iranian decision to go for nuclear weapons is not inevitable, and I think we can affect that choice.

But let me move on to another question and that has to do with this question of break out time. This is not the only criterion the U.S. administration uses to judge the value of an agreement, but it's an important one. It's important in large part because David Albright has written so extensively and persuasively on the issue, and that is to increase the amount of time that it would take Iran from the time it makes a decision to break out of an agreement, to leave an agreement, to the time it could produce enough highly enriched uranium actually to fabricate a first nuclear device. And in the past David has written that we should seek a break out time of somewhere between six and twelve months. The administration has said publicly that it's looking for a break out time of around 12 months. Now my question to David is whether we are headed toward a break out time in that ballpark. One of the recent developments that has given people some optimism in this regard is the report that Iran seems to agree that it can send a substantial amount, even most of its low enriched uranium out of its territory to Russia. And according to David's analysis, although I'm going to let him speak for himself, if you reduce the amount of enriched uranium stocks this gives you some flexibility to agree to a higher number of centrifuges and still maintain a sufficiently long break out time.

So my question to David is how do things look like they're shaping up?
Do you think that your benchmark is something that is achievable?

MR. ALBRIGHT: Yeah, I think it is. I mean I first should say we don't feel at ISIS, I guess the good ISIS, that we would be originators of this idea. I mean it flowed from discussions with Gary and others that really centered down on what kind of reaction time do you need in order to respond to an Iranian effort to go for the bomb? And I think Wendy Sherman captured it best in September when she said we must be confident that any effort by Tehran to break out of its obligations will be so visible and time consuming that the attempt would have no chance of success. And so if you then start saying, okay, what does that mean in terms of things like a centrifuge program, then you come up to this concept of break out. What break out essentially allows you to do is convert a desired reaction time into the number of centrifuges. And it involves some fairly sophisticated mathematical modeling in order to try to be more realistic and you end up with numbers -- if you want reaction times of six to twelve months, you end up with numbers that you want to get down to the 2-4000 IR1 levels. And those are driven by limiting the stocks particularly of 20 percent because again, it's still there. It's quite a large stock of 20 percent enriched uranium. People often kind of mistakenly say well we got rid of the 20 percent in this deal. What happened is you converted, the deal converted the 20 percent from hexafluoride form to oxide form; it's still there. There's been some amount, a significant amount blended down and that's gone, but about more than enough for a bomb in terms -- if you think of Netanyahu's way of thinking about this, that amount still is there, it's just in oxide form not in hexafluoride form, therefore it takes longer and that's good. You'd have to go back to hexafluoride. But how much will be there in a final deal? And we think there's going to be some. And we look at 50 kilograms and that can affect break out. But you do want to drive down the amount.

Now Bob raised this level of driving down the amount of three and a half percent and that can have a very positive impact on the break out times. And I think it's one of the reasons why the U.S. raised their number from around 1500 or 2000 up to 4000, is they feel that if they drive down the LEU stocks significantly then their break out time will remain at 12 months but they can go up to a higher number of centrifuges.

Now I think we at my group and U.S. government agree is that you can't let it go up to 10,000, 8,000, because again these centrifuges are making this three and half percent all the time. And so these limits become somewhat meaningless when you get to numbers like 8,000 10,000 IR1s because they're going to be making so much every month that it wouldn't take them long to stockpile enough to be able to have enough for a much more rapid break out. But again I should also say that there's a debate under this that why focus so much on the declared program. And I think going back to what Wendy said is that part of the reason is you want to limit them across the board. Of course we're worried about a covert break out, but we think there's an inter relationship. They have lot of centrifuges, 10,000 centrifuges or more, they have a fairly robust centrifuge manufacturing complex; very hard to monitor that. Even with these additional supplementary measures the IAEA is expected to get under a deal. And you would have a hard time knowing that there's no secret production of centrifuges that could then go off to a secret site. So you want to limit it across the board. Reaction time is the fundamental driver and then you translate that via break out into your limitations on a declared program, and reducing stocks of LEU strengthens whatever you get.

MR. EINHORN: Thank you, David. Ed, you suggested some very constructive ways that the Congress could contribute to the negotiations through additional legislation. That's not going to be the initial instinct of many members of Congress, especially in the new Congress. I would assume that a number of senators

would want to reintroduce some of the legislation that they've introduced before that would, you know, require the administration to achieve some unrealizable objectives, and failing that to impose sanctions that are very far reaching. I would also assume especially based on what Secretary Kerry said yesterday that the administration would strongly oppose any further sanctions on the grounds that it could be disruptive of the talks and that it could lead to divisions within the international sanctions coalition which is necessary to put continuing pressure on Iran. So I think that might be the initial confrontation, you know, draconian sanctions versus no new sanctions.

What are the chances that from that initial confrontation will come a real negotiation over trying to get legislation that serves to reinforce rather than to undercut the negotiating process?

MR. LEVINE: Notice everybody, what we've just switched to. From the question of negotiating with one foreign country, Iran, to the question of negotiating with another foreign country, Congress. (Laughter) They are not that dissimilar. I would say that you're correct, Bob, in your guess as to what will happen first. And that is perhaps a Kabuki that must be played out and it will put pressure on the administration to marshal democratic forces in the Senate to prevent the passage of a draconian bill. Now all of you who are used to complaining about republican obstructionism remember in six weeks it's going to be democratic obstructionism and that's going to be good obstructionism rather than bad obstructionism if you're a democrat. The democrats will have a lot of ways to block legislation if they choose to use them. What the administration has to worry about is a situation in which democratic senators give up on the administration, not so much giving up on Iran, but losing confidence in the administration's ability to negotiate well or to handle them well. Assuming that the administration is able to convince democratic senators that it will do the right thing with Iran what it probably also I

would think should do is say to democrats look, you have to work with us to kill the bad bills, we will work with you in private to see if there is a good bill that you could come up with afterwards or that you could come up with to pull out of your pocket when you're in a floor debate, but in some ways to show that we are not averse to any deal with Congress, we are merely averse to bad deals with Congress. So I would think there would be some pressure to talk, to explore possibilities for useful legislation. As I say they won't be easy, but it is amazing how if you try you can come up with something.

One of the things that has been impressive about U.S. negotiators with Iran is how many good ideas they have come up with and I would simply note to our audience that even David has come up with very interesting ideas that he slips in in the middle of paragraphs in his testimony. For example, when he testified last week before the House he said a sounder strategy involves including disablement steps with a destruction of a limited but carefully selected set of equipment. For example the deal could include the destruction of certain key cascade equipment such as valves or pressure or flow measuring equipment. What he was saying to the House Committee that if you want to reach a deal with Iran that lowers the number of functioning centrifuges, that doesn't mean that you have to destroy the centrifuges completely, rather you can destroy some critical parts of the centrifuges while leaving the shell and much of the innards still standing. That was a very interesting proposal. It's the kind of thing that I would guess, although I don't know, our negotiators have been discussing with Iran negotiators. And one of the things I would hope for in the coming months is that if Iran does not show more willingness to work out a deal that Secretary Kerry would relax his determination to keep everything secret and would instead be a little more open about how creative the P5+1 has been in the offers it has made to Iran so that Iran will realize that if the negotiations fall apart this spring and summer it won't look good for them. And

I think we have to prepare the world for the possibility of accepting that we are the good guys.

MR. EINHORN: I agree especially with that last point, Ed. If talks break down there's going to be a blame game and what we've seen over the last year is the current Iranian team is very good at public diplomacy. Many of them are western educated, they speak very good English; the negotiations are carried out in English these days. And they are going to make a strong case and they've been making a strong case and they've been the reasonable party. I don't think they have been the reasonable party, but I think much of the world has the impression that it's the P5+1 and the U.S. in particular that's been the intransigent party. I really do think that's wrong and I think it would behoove the administration to begin getting the word out, especially if the Iranians, you know, continue to be rigid. But so far the administration has taken the understandable view that we don't want to negotiate in public, so let's not put all our ideas out there even if they're reasonable ideas that the Iranians should have accepted. So, you know, this is a problem potentially in the future and I think the administration will need to develop a good public diplomacy strategy.

Well, I think our panelists have put some interesting material before you, given you plenty of thoughts for questions. So let's open it up now. Please wait for the mic, identify yourself, and ask a very concise question. Your hand was up first.

MR. MITCHELL: Thanks very much. I'm Garrett Mitchell and I write the Mitchell Report. Dr. Albright's suggestion strikes me as sort of a parallel to Daniel Patrick Moynihan's way of doing gun control, which was to let them keep the guns and stop producing bullets. There are two very quick questions I'd like to pose because I want to make sure I hear the answers. The first is has anyone actually ever seen and read the alleged fatwa from the Supreme Leader? And second, given that the Supreme Leader

has spent the last quarter century creating a foreign policy that is focused on America as Satan, has there ever been consideration given to having negotiations as they get to this point between Iran and the others take place without the U.S. at the table so that he doesn't have to give in to Satan?

MR. EINHORN: Anyone want -- anything to say on the fatwa?

MR. SAMORE: Sure. My understanding is nobody has seen a written version of the fatwa, but I'm sure Iran will produce one for you at the right time if it's part of a deal.

On your second question, the only way this negotiation will succeed if there's a deal between Washington and Tehran. There's no other possible formulation that will lead to an agreement because those are the principal antagonists on this issue. There's no proxy for the U.S. that could step in and negotiate a deal with Iran. So I think one of the positive developments since the Joint Plan of Action was agreed is that we see more and more that most of the real negotiations are taking place in a bilateral context with the U.S. representing the P5+1 and convincing the other members of the P5+1 to support American initiatives and ideas, but you can't negotiate at seven or eight. It's just simply impossible to sit around the table with all those parties and do the kind of give and take that's necessary for negotiation.

So one positive, if you're looking for positive signs, one positive sign is that the Iranians have finally got over the hurdle of meeting directly with the United States expert to expert and working on text. For most of President Obama's first term when Bob and I were directly involved the Iranians refused to meet with us. We offered many times to sit down and actually negotiate or discuss the issues and they were under instructions to not meet with us. Rouhani has at least persuaded the Supreme Leader to allow that direct discussion to take place. Of course Khamenei says in public that I'm very skeptical

that a deal is possible because I don't think the Americans will accept our nuclear program. And you know what, he's right. The United States won't accept Iran's nuclear program.

MR. EINHORN: And I'm told there were even secret bilateral U.S.-Iranian talks even when [Ahmadinejad](#) was President. And also you probably remember that between 2003 and 2005 the so called E3, you know, Britain, France, and Germany, met with Iran without the United States, but those talks didn't get very far which supports I think Gary's point that, you know, the U.S. needs to be a key player.

Yes.

SPEAKER: I must admit that reading today's Post I'm not as optimistic about the next seven months as people on the panel might be, but given that if during the next seven months nothing happens further than what has happened so far what does the panel think beyond the U.S. -- now we've talked about sanctions and so on, but there is another party, namely Israel, who could take some sort of action and what does the panel think would happen if we progressed to the next seven months, have not gone any further, and what would the U.S. and what would Israel be doing at the end of that seven months?

MR. EINHORN: Ed, do you want take it?

MR. LEVINE: I want to make a general point that applies not only to your question but some of the comments of my fellow panelists and that is the best answer to a lot of these questions is we don't know. We are operating under conditions of uncertainty and we would be better off accepting that uncertainty than trying to make predictions when frankly we don't have the basis on which to make them. But your question raises an interesting point that we haven't quite covered which is could the Joint Plan of Action become a steady state that exists into the undetermined future, and would

that we be good or bad? My guess is that my more expert colleagues if pressed to the wall will say we're not sure. (Laughter) It's certainly a better state than we had before the Joint Plan of Action, but there is the risk that it will impede progress to a real deal because it's such an easy second best solution. And I think that some of our talk of increased sanctions is looking for a way to force a decision on Tehran's part that will move us off of this surprisingly comfortable dead center.

MR. EINHORN: Gary, you wanted to say something?

MR. SAMORE: So I would say most of our partners in the P5+1 with the possible exception of France are quite comfortable with the status quo because we've succeeded in freezing most elements of Iran's nuclear program and yet we've preserved the overall sanctions regime. And I hear the same thing from some of our Israeli friend. They recognize that the status quo while not solving the problem at least it stopped the clock or slowed down the clock on Iran's nuclear program. So I think there's an argument to be made that an extension of the Joint Plan of Action is at least holding the issue steady. But my sense, and Ed can speak to this as well, my sense is that in this town there's no patience for an endless extension into the indefinite future unless you can demonstrate that you're really making progress toward tackling some of these tough issues. So I think the Obama administration is operating in a political climate where it's got to show forward movement, it can't just play out the clock for the rest of its administration, keeping the status quo in place.

SPEAKER: (off mic)

MR. SAMORE: As I said --

MR. EINHORN: We'll get to that. I'll get to that. I'll get to that.

MR. SAMORE: -- I think many Israelis would not be that adverse to a continuation of the status quo.

MR. EINHORN: David, you had something?

MR. ALBRIGHT: Yeah. And I think one think in a sense to reinforce what Ed said is I don't think any outcomes are inevitable. I don't think it's inevitable that Israel will strike militarily. I mean Washington is very polarized and you hear these comments that, you know, if the deal breaks down it's war, you know. I don't think those are true. I think the deal has some benefits to both sides; both sides have some real incentives not to see the escalation getting out of control. So I think it's more likely that things will kind of -- if the deal ends that there will be something that replaces it that is neither war nor a situation with extreme sanctions. And I think Israel -- you know, you should look deeper into the Israeli government and Netanhayu to see what they're really thinking. I mean I don't think they want to go to war. And they know that if they strike they can strike once and that's it. And Iran can simply build back. So they know the dilemma that if you are going to pursue military strikes it has to be part of a strategy that ends their program. And they can't deliver that. And I don't see a great incentive here in this country to back them up.

MR. EINHORN: And I might as well chime in too. You know, if talks break down at the end of next June, discontinued, what will the Israelis do? It will depend on what Iran does. If they ratchet up their program aggressively that will lead to a lot of Israeli concern, but if they play it smart which I think they will, the Iranians have given every indication of playing it smart, they will be very slow. Maybe they'll, you know, turn on some machines that haven't been fed with gas, maybe they'll increase at the margin. But I think they will avoid highly provocative actions and if they do, if they're smart enough to do that, I think the Israelis will be frustrated but I don't think they will see a compelling need to launch a military attack.

Yes?

MS. COOKE: Stephanie Cooke, Nuclear Intelligence Weekly. I have two questions. First, I think for you, Bob, how much attention do you think the United States might take toward working with the Russians to try to work out more details of their agreement with the Iranians if we're assuming that the goal here is to try to regularize the Iranian nuclear program and give them some justification for some sort of commercial enrichment going forward? That's number one. And that I mean both the reactor deal, but more importantly I suppose the fuel deal end of that deal which was pretty vague when the announcement was made.

And secondly, how much scope is there in your view of the United States if the Iranians -- I mean in my opinion if they were smart they would kind of say look, we have terrible machines, we need to get better machines, so let's focus on R & D. We don't need the capacity right now, so give them that and look further into the future. But I mean this has become such a point of symbolism that it's kind of hard for them to do it. But let's say they were willing to finally concede on capacity, how much scope is there for our side to concede on the duration of the agreement?

MR. EINHORN: I'll take a quick whack at it and then the others will try. And I was in Moscow last week and so I had an opportunity to speak to the Russians about this. I think despite the real difficulties U.S. and Russia are having in their bilateral relationship, the Russians have played a constructive role in the Iran negotiations. It's been in their interests to play a constructive role. The Russians don't want the Iranians to develop an industrial scale enrichment capacity. Russia would like to provide fuel for whatever nuclear power reactors that it sells to Iran. In fact this recent deal a couple of weeks ago, the Russian strong belief is that for any additional reactors Russia should provide the fuel, and if that is to be agreed to by Iran this would seriously undercut the Iranian argument that I needs to have a large scale indigenous enrichment capability.

Also you've seen reports; I mentioned it earlier, about the shipment from Iran to Russia of most of Iran's low enriched uranium. If that materializes, and my understanding is that details have not been worked out, quantities and so forth, but if it does work out then this would be a very positive step because as we've discussed the lower the amount of enriched uranium stocks the more leeway you have to accept a higher number of centrifuges. So I think the Russians have played a constructive role in their own interest.

MS. COOKE: They're open to the LEU coming from Iran?

MR. EINHORN: Yes. I think -- well, this is to be worked out. They have to figure out -- there will be costs associated with that, with the transport of the material to Russia. You know, there's a question whether the enriched uranium of Iran is technically suitable to be used in the production of fuel and there could be additional costs associated with that. So lots of details have yet to be worked out, but I think the Russians have played a constructive role and will continue to play.

In terms of whether if everything else works out the U.S. would be more flexible on duration of an agreement, I believe the duration is very, very important and I think that's one of the issues where the U.S. has to remain very firm. The Iranians have talked about a pretty short duration, you know, five years or something like that because they would like all constraints to end so they could ratchet up quickly to an industrial scale enrichment capability. But that would drastically reduce their break out timeline and this would be unacceptable. I think the constraints have to last a long time. My preference would be 15 years or so. And this would provide sufficient time for Iran to demonstrate a track record of compliance with its obligations and to begin to restore confidence in its peaceful intent.

I don't know if any of the others want to comment.

MR. ALBRIGHT: Yeah, just one quick thing. Yeah, I think the centrifuge

R & D is a separate issue. There's no trade off with sort of the basic number of IR1s that would remain. You know, the problem posed by centrifuge R & D is that if they have breakthroughs then they have much more capable machines and so they can get by with many fewer machines if they did decide to build a covert plan and so --

MS. COOKE: (Inaudible) if they agreed to negotiate in SWU rather than in number of machines?

MR. ALBRIGHT: Yeah, but that doesn't mean anything. I mean finally the SWU matters but the Iranians, you know, tried to play it out this summer in a very unproductive way because, you know, you can lower the SWU by lowering the speed of the machine. It's a little bit like lift your foot off the accelerator. Well, just as quickly you can put your foot down again. And so I think the SWU number that they've discussed doesn't really mean anything and so you're forced back to okay, here's the number of machines, given the amount of SWU you're producing in these machines and therefore we can make a conversion based on SWU, but fundamentally it's based on existing machines with existing capabilities.

MS. COOKE: (off mic).

MR. ALBRIGHT: And it's a problem in the centrifuge R & D --

MR. EINHORN: Okay, we get it.

MR. ALBRIGHT: -- because they won't reveal very much about what those machines do. They don't reveal it to the IAEA at the pilot plant for example.

MR. EINHORN: You can speak to David afterwards on this.

MR. ALBRIGHT: Yeah.

MR. EINHORN: Yes, Greg?

MR. THEILMANN: Greg Theilmann, Arms Control Association. I wanted to follow up a little bit, Bob, on the Russian-Iran deal that you mentioned. Clearly by Iran

signaling a willingness for Russia not only to build its additional reactors, but also for Russia to supply fuel for those reactors as well as remove the spent fuel they are weakening the argument for the practical need to support a large number of centrifuges in the future. And my question is given the way the Supreme Leader has been characterized and his hostility to really limiting the Iranian capabilities why would the Supreme Leader approve this deal with Russia?

MR. SAMORE: Well, I mean in think that the narrative in Iran that they need to have an independent capacity to produce fuel for their power reactors because they can't rely on the Russians or any other outside supplier, that's a very appealing narrative. There's a lot of strong public support for that narrative. So I don't see this deal with Russia as undercutting Iran's argument that it needs to eventually have an industrial scale enrichment capacity to provide fuel. And of course such a capacity would also give them a very strong nuclear weapons option, either covert or overt.

MR. EINHORN: And they'll want their cake and eat it too. They'll want to agree that Russia can provide fuel for new reactors, but they also want to have the stand by capability in place, built and about to operate in case, you know, the Russians renege, in case something happens and they don't have the fuel. So they want the capability anyway as well as the Russian commitment to provide fuel.

MR. ALBRIGHT: Yeah. No, that's good.

MR. EINHORN: Yes, in the back.

MR. ALCARO: Riccardo Alcaro; I'm a Visiting Fellow here at Brookings. I have a question for Dr. Albright concerning the potential military dimensions he focuses on in his initial presentation. I was wondering if you could tell us more about what these PMDs post 2003 are because the report of the IAEA of November 2011 was pretty much details concerning the pre-2003 period, but very, very vague after that. The U.S.

intelligence services seem not even to completely share the assumption that some of those military related activities have actually been going on ever since. And going back to your fundamental point that solving that issue is (speaking in foreign language) for closing the deal, I do follow your logic, I do understand your logic and your argument, but my question is will you be willing to really undermine agreements on Iran's enrichment capacity, on the duration of the deal, on sanctions relief on the verification measures just to fully clarify an issue which was certainly substantial before 2003, but perhaps it is no longer so now.

MR. ALBRIGHT. I think the resolution of the PMD is fundamental to any agreement, its core. And so I think there's ways to deal with it. I mean I've written things where we have suggested compromises on this, but I think it's core to any agreement and if you don't settle it you're going to end up with an agreement that risks being unverifiable and hurts the credibility of this very valuable international institution in the IAEA. And they've learned in other cases that if you turn your back on the history they will fail. And all you have to do is look at Iraq in 1991. They also in South Africa in the early '90s when South Africa wouldn't talk about the history they could not verify that South Africa had given up its nuclear weapons program. And so they learned the hard way that history does matter if you're going to build a credible verification regime.

On the PMDs, the IAEA has been fairly circumspect. What my organization has seen is there are issues about calculations related to nuclear weapons. There was a recent sanctioning of an Iranian entity by the U.S. government where they said it was started in 2011, it's headed by Mohsen Fakhrizadeh and it involves work that's related to nuclear weapons. So I think the IAEA view is actually it appears to me fairly widespread that there are ongoing concerns about what some of the people are doing that were in this pre-2004 program.

MR. EINHORN: Ed, a short answer.

MR. LEVINE: I think that PMD is important largely for its impact on verification in the future. And when Yukia Amano spoke here a couple of weeks ago he made clear what he wanted to see in a deal which was access to facilities, access to personnel, and access to information. Access to facilities is something that we have been used to and the kind of verification provisions that people have talked about would essentially guarantee that kind of access. When you talk about access to personnel then the question is who are you talking about. Well, that's where it gets to be important to know what was done in the past because you want to include in your future personnel list all of the people who were involved with the program in the past so that you know who to talk to on a regular basis, who to watch closely. And when you talk about information you're really talking about all right, what was the structure of your program, how were things done, what organizations were there that we want to follow through time and make sure we understand, what new ones are you creating with the same old personnel to cause us further worries. My view is that much of that could be done, could be set forth in an agreement even without Iran satisfying the PMD issues before an agreement is signed. But you would certainly want to have future major sanction relief contingent upon the IAEA saying we have solved three of these issues, six of these issues, nine of these issues, whatever. You would want perhaps to keep those solutions secret because Iranian personnel have an understandable fear of being assassinated. And so you would want to force Iran to come clean with the IAEA and maybe with us and our P5+1 colleagues, but not necessarily with the Associated Press.

MR. EINHORN: Okay. We have only a few more minutes to go. We'll take a few quick questions; make them very concise and the panelists will give some concluding remarks. This gentleman here first.

MR. MOHSENI: Brian Mohseni from University of Maryland. If you may recall back in 2006 President Rouhani wrote an article in the Times magazine saying that the difficulty we are facing is that the west is asking us to take concrete steps in return for promises in which we do not have much confidence. Today the critics in Iran are basically voicing the same kind of concern. What do you think the United States should do or not do to basically reassure the Iranians that it does have the will and the ability to live up to its part of the bargain? Thank you.

MR. EINHORN: Yes, sir, right here.

MR. CHABAS: Jose Chabas, of the (inaudible) University. Dr. Levine talked about the issue of the Congress and the relation with that decision, but I still like to get the opinion or the view of Mr. Samore and Mr. Einhorn because I'm more skeptical than Dr. Levine is about the role of the new Congress and I want to know how possibly if this excision doesn't work by end of June in this new Congress and the environment in D.C. how that message can really convince both republicans and democrats that we have to either go with another extension or -- because as you said the worst option is walk away and break down the talks. Thank you.

MR. EINHORN: Yes, the woman in the back who is waving her hand.

MS. CHOUDHARY: Hi. Deepika Choudhary with the Center for International Policy. Would members of the panel support additional sanctions on Iran at this time as has been suggested and why or why not?

MR. EINHORN: Thank you for being so concise. (Laughter) Yes, one there.

MR. LIBITI: Thank you. Ivan Libiti for the Russian News Agency and my question is you were talking about the need for more concessions from Iranians. The question is do you think there is any room for more concessions and flexibility on the

negotiations from P5+1 taking into account the own agenda of each country, their overall political situation, and if you will, U.S. politics and so. Thank you.

MR. EINHORN: And the last one over here.

MR. BUCKNAM: Hi, Mark Bucknam from the National War College. How close do we think Iran got by 2003 to proving the technology needed to produce a nuclear weapon? Is it possible that they proved to their own satisfaction that all they need was fizzle material?

MR. EINHORN: Okay. Why don't we just go down the row and deal with these remaining questions and any concluding remarks you'd like to make.

MR. SAMORE: Great. Okay, several people asked a cluster of questions about sanctions relief so let me address those. I think one of the big problems for an agreement is exactly as Professor Mohseni said; Iran is concerned that the U.S. won't be able to deliver on sanctions relief. And clearly the President is not going to be able to convince Congress to repeal all of the sanctions against Iran that are in place. But the President does have the authority to wave most of the sanctions, the one that really count, the oil and the financial sanctions, every six months. Now the protection Iran has is that in any agreement if Obama can't deliver, for example if Congress overrides the President when he waives the sanctions then the deal is off and Iran is free to resume its nuclear activities. And the fact of the matter is Iran is at a point in its nuclear program where it's not going to be able -- it's not being asked and it could not permanently give up its ability to resurrect its nuclear program. So I actually think that the question of sanctions relief is one that can be addressed in the deal. The more difficult problem as we've talked about is that Iran is simply not willing to come even close to meeting the P5+1 demands on limiting its nuclear program.

Now the gentleman asked about further extensions. I mean my guess,

and Ed will have a view on this as well, my guess is that Congress is unlikely to overturn the current extension, the current seven month extension mainly because as long as Iran continues to comply with the Joint Plan of Action we've frozen their program, and so we lose very little by trying to see whether or not it's possible to come to an agreement. I think it's going to be very difficult to get any additional extensions unless there is genuine progress on these critical issues that we've talked about. If there is progress then I think it will be possible to justify an additional extension. But under current circumstances unless Iran changes its position I think it's probably not possible politically.

Why don't I stop here.

MR. ALBRIGHT: Let me just say on the question of the technology, I mean there's an internal IAEA report; I mean we've published parts of it and I know some of the people involved in it. I mean their assessment was that Iran knew enough to build a crude fission weapon at the end of this 2003 period. It was working on a miniaturized design for Shahab-3 which was going about .55 meters across, but it had a long way to go to finish that. But the IA group felt that if they picked up that work again they would succeed. So I think they've made substantial progress on this question of being able to produce a bomb and that's part of what causes the concern.

You know, just as a final comment I think in the technical community I think hope is there for a deal. I mean but there are a lot of parts to it and that can be a curse and a blessing. I mean there's a lot of places Iran has to make a concession, U.S. has to consider its possibility, but there's also tradeoffs among these parts and so when you look collectively at all this I think I remain hopeful that the U.S. can be creative along with Iran to be able to construct a deal that both can live with.

MR. EINHORN: Ed? Short.

MR. LEVINE: On the question of whether we are for more sanctions,

speaking for myself I could imagine being for more sanctions authority but not for more sanctions per se at this time. And thus I am wary of sanctions with triggers. I would much rather discuss with the administration what they might need in the future and give them the authority to take steps if they decide they need it, but Congress is not a very effective institution for running foreign policy. And there I betray my past. I used to work for old style republicans who believed in a strong president.

Now on the question of whether we have any more give. We don't know because we haven't been told how much give we've already offered in the negotiations. And so it's very difficult to figure that out. What I do think might interest the Iranians is the extent to which under a situation of major sanctions relief they would get real benefits from foreign commerce and from greater international acceptability and being welcomed back into the international community. To that extent that isn't a matter of giving them something in a negotiation, it is a matter of making sure they are aware of how much they have to gain if a deal is reached. And therefore how much they lose by refusing to make compromises that we think are reasonably within their overall objectives.

MR. EINHORN: Final note by me, I don't know -- nobody here knows whether we'll achieve a deal. I think it's going to be very difficult. I think there is a reasonable prospect that we won't be able to come to terms. If we do it's not going to be a perfect deal. We will not have achieved everything that we wanted to achieve, but that's the nature of negotiation. But I think it's important, two things, one to look at the deal as a whole as David had said, not to focus on any one particular element of it, the number of centrifuges, the amount of stocks, and so forth, look at the overall deal.

Second point to make, one needs to be realistic about the alternatives to the deal. A deal may not be perfect but look at what the realistic alternatives are. In my view there are two alternatives. One is to try to ratchet up sanctions in the hope that the

Iranians will have more flexibility eventually, but they've been under pretty harsh sanctions for over a year now and this hasn't moved them sufficiently. So it's going to be hard to do that and the effort of trying to do that is going to raise some real concerns among members of the sanctions coalition that we need to continue to put pressure on Iran.

Another alternative is the use of military force. Military force can succeed temporarily. It can set back the program but it can't prevent Iran from eventually succeeding in its objective, and indeed it could give Iran additional incentives to move more quickly toward actually building nuclear weapons.

So my appeal would be not just to our audience, but to members of Congress and the American public in general is to look realistically at the alternatives and then to make up your minds.

Anyway, I want to thank you, you've been a terrific audience. And I especially want to thank Gary, David, and Ed for giving us a very illuminating conversation. So thank you. (Applause)

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