

NOT CONTENT WITH STOKING IRAN TENSIONS THROUGH “ANALYSIS”, ALBRIGHT TRIES HIS HAND AT LEGISLATION

It's no secret that I am hardly a fan of David Albright and his Institute for Science and International Security. He often has been the “go to” authority when countries hostile to Iran have chosen to leak selectively groomed information to put Iran in the harshest possible light. The countries leak the information to a select few journalists and then Albright is called in to provide his “analysis” of how evil Iran is and how determined they are to produce nuclear weapons.

I also have been hammering hard on Robert Menendez's Senate bill that calls for increased sanctions on Iran. As Ali Gharib noted immediately, the bill spells out conditions for the final agreement between Iran and the P5+1 group of countries that we know Iran will never agree to, so the bill guarantees that the new sanctions will eventually kick in, even if a final agreement is reached.

The New York Times is finally catching up to the points Gharib made almost exactly a month ago:

But where the legislation may have an effect, and why it so worries the White House, is that it lays down the contours of an acceptable final nuclear deal. Since administration officials insist that many of those conditions are unrealistic, it basically sets Mr. Obama up for failure.

/snip/

White House officials zeroed in on three of the conditions: first, that any deal would dismantle Iran's "illicit nuclear infrastructure"; second, that Iran "has not directly, or through a proxy, supported, financed, planned or otherwise carried out an act of terrorism against the United States"; and third, that Iran has not tested any but the shortest-range ballistic missiles.

"They're basically arguing for a zero enrichment capacity, with a complete dismantling of Iran's nuclear facilities," said Daryl G. Kimball, executive director of the Arms Control Association. "That's not attainable, and it's not necessary to prevent Iran from getting a weapon."

I was not at all prepared, though, for what the Times learned about how this abhorrent piece of legislation was crafted:

Proponents of the bill deny it would deprive Iran of the right to modest enrichment. They point to the qualifier "illicit" in the reference to nuclear facilities that must be dismantled, and they say the language on enrichment is intentionally vague to mollify both Republicans, who are reluctant to grant Iran the right to operate even a single centrifuge, and Democrats, who balked at signing on to a bill that would rule out all enrichment.

"There's no language that says a centrifuge is prohibited or allowed," said David Albright, an expert on Iran's nuclear program at the Institute for Science and International Security, who helped Republicans and Democrats draft some of the technical wording.

The ambiguity, he said, reflected the

fact that the lawmakers who sponsored the bill are “doing it in a bipartisan way, but they have disagreements on what the end state should look like.”

Oh. My. God.

To craft one of the most important bills in US foreign policy in over a decade, Menendez and his cronies turned to an “analyst” who has a long history of producing precisely the analysis that war hawks want. And he even has the gall to brag about how the weasel words that he crafted have different meanings depending on who is reading the bill.

I really have to just stop right here and let commenters fill in the rest for me. My health and sanity won’t let me think any further on the ramifications of David Albright writing legislation on US foreign policy toward Iran.