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This particular piece appeared in The Jewish Daily Forward:

<http://blogs.forward.com/jj-goldberg/218108/-questions-on-iran-for-benjamin-netanyahu/>

My “slice and dice” is in red.

Benjamin Netanyahu’s round-robin tour of America’s Sunday interview shows — hitting NBC, ABC and CNN on a single morning — was a master stroke by Israel’s much-maligned public diplomacy operation. If any news consumer was still wondering on Saturday night where Israel’s elected government stands on the Iran nuclear framework agreement, that was cleared up by Sunday afternoon.

Left unanswered are several questions about the prime minister’s own intentions. In fact, his performance raises as many questions as it answers. Logically,

>>“Logically”—was he invited? I mean this is the country with their lives on the line.

he should be reacting to the announcement of the Lausanne framework with a victory lap around the capitals of the six powers, claiming credit for raising the global alarm (not entirely deserved — it was already on the world agenda before he became prime minister, but he certainly played a key role) and for providing the military threat that helped push the Iranians to blink.

>>Please explain to me like I was a 4 year old, how did Iran “blink”

Thanks in good measure to his efforts, Iran has agreed to decommission two-thirds of its operating centrifuges,

>>How and who will verify this?

stop development of its next-generation centrifuges,

>>How and who will verify this?

get rid of all its medium-enriched 20% uranium

>>How and who will verify this?

and all but 300 kilograms of its low-enriched 3.5% uranium,

>>How and who will verify this?

convert its menacing nuclear installations at Fordow and Arak to alternate uses

>>How and who will verify this?

and allow highly intrusive inspection of all the above.

>>***No they didn’t. They did not.*** As per the Iranian lead negotiator’s direct, unequivocal statement, they DID NOT.

There are major details still be worked out in the coming months, including how the inspections will work,

>>Hate to bring rain on the parade, but the inspectors directly work for and report to the UN Security Council, where the US is one vote ...so as Russia ... so as China. The same “Russia” that is pissed beyond belief because of Ukraine, knows and understands that we have a clown in the White House, and has huge business interest in Iran. Russia WILL NOT LET the daily inspection go forward. By the way, the IAEA is also under direct reporting to the Security Council. So even if the Wunderkind’s Iran mirage worked, there is ZERO (let me repeat it: ZERO, None, nada) US influence on actual daily operation (go back, and read your tirade where I kept asking >>How and who will verify this?)

where the excess uranium will go and what happens if they’re found cheating. But it’s still an impressive list of concessions, way beyond anything they’ve ever agreed to in the past and far more than anyone was expecting in the negotiations’ frantic closing days.

>>How and who will verify this?

>>The “Memorandum of Understanding” was NOT SIGNED by a single party in Lausanne. And on top of that Kerry said, the ultimate agreement is “non-binding” anyway

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But a victory lap hasn't been his chosen path.

>>Nor was Winston Churchill's when that moron Neville Chamberlain fell for the same trick. Cost the world 57 million lives among them 7 million Jewish...do you people at "Jewish Daily Forward" read about any of this??

On the contrary, he's calling the deal a historic mistake and a threat to Israel's existence. I

>>He is 110% correct.

It seems odd.

>>Maybe to a liberal.

And since this is the Passover season, a few blunt questions seem in order.

First Question: The prime minister bases much of his objection to the announced framework on the fact that the agreement doesn't require Iran to recognize Israel and stop sponsoring terrorism.

>>That's one part of it

Those are worthy goals to work for, but they weren't on the agenda at Lausanne.

>>Oh I GET IT NOW !!! So if this was not on the "agenda" in Lausanne, then this problem does not exist! So let's just let the mullahs keep saying they will destroy Tel Aviv on the day they built the first nuke.

The six powers entered a negotiation with Iran, based on the Geneva agreement in November 2013, with the sole aim of preventing Iran from attaining a nuclear weapon. The bomb was the danger that threatened the global order, as Netanyahu so memorably warned at the United Nations in 2012, when he risked his own dignity to brandish a Looney Tunes cartoon bomb before the eyes of the world.

>>Which was much better than drawing lines, then coloring them to red, then —like a clown— disregard them

The bomb was and is the Iranian threat before which all the others pale. To raise those other issues now as weaknesses in the current agreement is to change the subject and move the goalposts.

Why does the prime minister feel he needs to focus his criticism of the Lausanne framework on its failure to solve a problem that wasn't on the agenda?

>>On the same ground Churchill objected; both knew the agreement is BS.

Does he feel that the problems that actually were on the agenda have been too adequately addressed to merit a full-scale attack? Why is he risking his credibility to launch an attack on the process based on a problem that the process wasn't meant to solve?

>>I don't know if the writer or the ones who are sending this garbage around ever been to Israel, but go there and will get the answer.

Second Question: The prime minister argues that the alternative to the current deal is a better deal. Rather than engaging Iran in a negotiating process, which has necessarily involved concessions on both sides at every stage, he favors stiffer sanctions in order to pressure Iran into far more extreme concessions.

>>Oh! Now I got it! The Iran that has been cheating for 15 years! Yes, we need to engage them!! Like Chamberlain engaged Hitler! When 2 weeks after the agreement, Hitler overrun ¼ of Europe.

Those with long historical memories — going back further than, say, six years — will recall that during the Bush administration's no-engagement policy before 2009, sanctions were imposed by America, Europe and the United Nations, but much of the world ignored them, including Russia and China, and Iran was proceeding full-steam toward nuclear capability.

>>Aha! So the problem is not that we need to tighten the sanctions or bomb Iran out of existence, the problem that we didn't "engage"!

Things didn't start to change until 2009, when the Obama administration got directly engaged in negotiations. That convinced the Russians and the Chinese to take the process seriously, and the sanctions finally began to hurt.

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That, plus the military threats from Netanyahu post-2009, led to Iran agreeing in 2013 in Geneva for the first time to suspend enrichment and begin serious talks.

>>...and in the meantime, Iran kept enriching

If these talks don't succeed,

>>If my grandma had a horn, she would have been a fire truck.

the alternative isn't a better deal — it's Russia and China abandoning the sanctions and Iran going back to Plan A, resuming its race to bomb capability.

>>Well, now I have an idea! Why don't we GIVE a nuke to Iran then! That would solve all the problems.

That's not some left-wing fantasy.

>>No. This is mental illness. This is idiocy, being a cretin, a mental handicap. A moron. A person, who has not read history. But, it is not a "fantasy" —on that I agree.

It's the assessment of Israel's own intelligence agency, the Mossad. Back in January, when Netanyahu and his Washington allies were pushing for the so-called Kirk-Menendez bill to ratchet up sanctions, Mossad director [Tamir Pardo](#) warned a group of visiting American senators that passage of the bill would torpedo the negotiations and return the situation to the pre-2009 standoff.

Netanyahu knew Pardo's view, which is shared by his immediate predecessors, Meir Dagan and Efraim Halevy. That's why the prime minister tried to call off the senators' Mossad briefing.

Delegation leader Bob Corker, chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, threatened in turn to cut his visit short and return to Washington. The briefing went ahead on January 19 as scheduled. The next day Obama gave his State of the Union address, in which he threatened to veto the Kirk-Menendez bill. The day after that, House Speaker John Boehner invited Netanyahu to address Congress and lay out the case for new sanctions in place of the current negotiations.

>>Well, we needed at least one person in DC, who is not a pathological liar, not an idiot, --an adult.

Pardo, under pressure from Netanyahu, [tried to walk back](#) his warning a day later, leaving the impression that Netanyahu had the backing of his intelligence community. But in late March another member of Corker's delegation, Lindsey Graham, confirmed the original version. Asked by the Washington Post whether Israeli intelligence had tried to feed the senators cooked reports to undermine Obama's case for talks, [Graham said](#) he hadn't learned "anything new" from Pardo "except that the Israelis thought that legislation calling for imposing new sanctions could hurt the negotiations."

>>Well, this is a nice story, and I have a Brooklyn bridge for sale to anyone (incl. the person who wrote this garbage), who claims he/she knows the inner workings of the Israeli government. Plus, this is their life and their existence, so armchair soldiers and politicians (and moronic writers) should shut up.

The question the prime minister hasn't yet answered is why his assessments are so utterly at odds with his intelligence agencies.

>>Because probably he has another assessment he counts on.

Third Question: The Iranian talks are far from the only instance of Netanyahu crafting policies based on threat assessments and readings of the Middle East landscape that are utterly at odds with those of his intelligence agencies. Even on the essential question of how grave a threat Iran poses to Israel, Pardo has [argued semi-publicly since 2011](#) that Iran is not an existential threat and that it's a serious mistake for Israel to portray it that way.

>>Now I am relieved. The fact that several of the top 5 leaders of Iran repeatedly declared they will eliminate Israel, let's just believe an out-of-commission general.

Pardo's two immediate predecessors, former Mossad chiefs [Meir Dagan](#) and [Efraim Halevy](#), say the same thing.

And there's a near-unanimous consensus among Israel's military and intelligence leadership that Israel should embrace the 2002 Saudi Peace Initiative, which offers Israel full recognition and an

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“end of the Arab-Israeli conflict” in return for Israeli agreement to Palestinian statehood on the 1967 borders (with land swaps)

>>Now the writer is going off the reservation with this BS. Read this link:

http://www.mygoatopined.com/Writings/11-09.27_The%20Occupation%20of%20Palestine.pdf

and a “just” and “agreed” solution to the refugee problem. Netanyahu dismisses that assessment, too.

What’s the relevance of the Arab peace initiative in the current debate? It’s this: A few months after the initiative was adopted unanimously by the 22-nation Arab League, it was put before the 57-nation Organization of Islamic Cooperation and approved 56-to-0, with one abstention: Iran. That is, when the Islamic nations took the historic step of offering to accept Israel under certain conditions (conditions that, again, Israel’s military-intelligence establishment finds plausible), Iran did not vote “no.”

So here’s the mystery: Where does Netanyahu get his intelligence if not from his intelligence agencies?

>>Well, first this is not a question we will answer. He is the elected Prime Minister of Israel.

And by the way, why does he spend billions of shekels per year paying for an intelligence apparatus that he consistently ignores?

>>That’s again, not the writer’s business

Fourth Question: Does the prime minister actually thinks he has a real prospect of convincing a critical mass of nations to ratchet up the sanctions on Iran rather than walk away from the whole mess if the current negotiations fail?

>>He is rational you moron. Like Churchill was.

Based on his plea that the Iranian nuclear program represents a mortal threat to Israel? Is he under the impression that the nations of the world give a rat’s behind about Israel’s fears — given that they know Israel’s own vaunted intelligence agencies think the fears are overblown?

>>YES! NOW YOU GOT IT!! THEY DO GIVE A RAT’S ASS!! Europe is infected by Muslims, anti-Semitism is going through the roof, the guy in the WH is a Muslim agent. Other than that, Bibi has no point.

Is that what he’s counting on? Really?

>>He doesn’t count on anything. He operates beased on his country’s interest. Which is the polar opposite to what the Wunderkind in the WH has been doing since 2009.