

Obama Will Turn his Blind Spot for Islamic Terrorism to Iran

One of the major issues in the debate over the Iran deal revolves around the question of what will happen if international inspectors want to visit a particular nuclear site, and the Iranians say no. But an equally important consideration is: What will happen if Iranian violations are actually discovered? The Obama administration's handling of Palestinian violations of agreements they've signed offers an important clue as to how it will respond to Iranian breaches. Consider the issue of incitement to commit terror. The Oslo Accords obligated the Palestinian leadership to "abstain from incitement, including hostile propaganda." This obligation was reiterated in the 1998 Wye River agreement, which required the Palestinian Authority (PA) to "prevent incitement against the Israeli side." The United States government has never denied that the PA's anti-Israel incitement is a serious problem. In fact, after the massacre of four rabbis and a policeman in a Jerusalem synagogue last November, Secretary of State John Kerry said the attack was "a pure result of incitement, of calls for 'days of rage,' of just irresponsibility," and "is unacceptable." There is, however, a big difference between talking about incitement and actually doing something about it—as Israel has discovered. Back in 1998, when the Israelis began complaining seriously to the Bill Clinton administration about the PA's incitement, the administration should have taken Israel's side and insisted that the PA stop it. But it didn't. Getting tough with the PA might "endanger the peace process," the White House reasoned. And maintaining the appearance of a "peace process" became the administration's priority. So instead of siding with its ally, the U.S. created a committee. The "Trilateral Anti-Incitement Committee" met a

few times from 1999-2000 and then stopped functioning. In a *Washington Post* op-ed last December, Prof. Shibley Telhami, one of the American members of the committee, gave the public a glimpse of what went on during those meetings. Telhami revealed that the committee reached an impasse because the Israeli and Palestinian representatives "could not agree how to define incitement." He wrote that the Israelis "would present, for instance, a statement by a Muslim religious figure against Israel, and Palestinians would respond by citing settlement construction or episodes of Palestinian humiliation." Telhami's self-serving description did not actually tell the whole story. The Israeli delegates didn't present just "a statement by a Muslim religious figure." According to one of the Israeli representatives, Palestinian Media Watch director Itamar Marcus, he and his colleagues would present statements that had been made by paid PA officials (some of whom were Muslim religious figures) as well as statements that were broadcast by the official PA news media. Obviously, the Palestinian position was absurd. "Settlement construction" and "humiliation" do not qualify as incitement. The fact that the PA doesn't want Jews building homes in Jerusalem or having Palestinians checked for weapons at security checkpoints doesn't make those situations incitement. But for Telhami and the other delegates, who were operating on instructions from the White House and the State Department, the goal was not to stop incitement. The goal was to keep the "peace process" going. Confronting the PA on incitement might cause a crisis in the "peace process." So instead of siding with the truth, the U.S. representatives chose to be "even-handed" and not take sides. The Anti-Incitement Committee soon fell apart. The Obama administration never revived it—because if the committee did its job, the "peace process" would be exposed as a sham. Thus, its response to Palestinian incitement is usually to ignore it. But if the incitement gets so bad that it results in a massacre, then Secretary Kerry will say a few words. But nothing more. The Iran deal creates a similar situation. If the international

inspectors are given genuine access to Iranian nuclear sites, and the Iranians have not done a sufficiently thorough job of hiding what they are doing there, the inspectors will find violations. At that point, the Obama administration will face a choice: acknowledge the violations and tear up the agreement—or cover up the violations so that the “peace agreement” can be preserved. Based on President Barack Obama’s track record, it’s not hard to guess which path he will choose. *Stephen M. Flatow, an attorney in New Jersey, is the father of Alisa Flatow, who was murdered in an Iranian-sponsored Palestinian terrorist attack in 1995. Reprinted from*

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