

Negotiations, Potsdam Style

written by Dr. Yitzhak Klein | 16.06.2025

The Wall Street Journal reported today that the Iranian regime has passed a message to the United States through intermediaries that it wants to negotiate de-escalation of its war with Israel. Of course they do. Iran's tactics throughout its 30-year march to nuclear armaments has been to call for negotiations, spin them out, divide its interlocutors – and keep the centrifuges spinning. This was its tactic as late as last Thursday, when it rejected an American position and hoped to participate in another negotiation session on Sunday, where its negotiators would seek to spin the talks out more. The Ayatollahs simply want the bombing to stop so they can resume their tactic of negotiations that never lead anywhere, while they resume their dash for a nuclear bomb.

On Friday the 13th the Ayatollahs' luck ran out. Israel, with the backing of the Trump administration, made it clear that the time for negotiations has passed. Israel intends to peel away Iran's military, its nuclear project, and its civilian economy layer by layer, like an onion.

In calling for negotiations Iran is hoping to drive a wedge between Israel and the United States, reengaging the latter in endless negotiations, holding out the prospect of a deal that, like the carrot hanging in front of a donkey's nose, will always be just out of reach. By backing Israel's offensive against Iran the Trump administration has shown that it refuses to play the chump in this Iranian charade. It would be a pity if the President were to succumb to Iranian blandishments now.

The kind of negotiations that the Iranian regime now needs to be engaged in are those the United States adopted toward Japan when it published the Potsdam Declaration in July 1945: These are our terms. Let us know when you're ready to accept them. Until then the bombing goes on.

The terms of the Potsdam Declaration the United States and Israel should proffer to Iran now are as follows:

Within 48 hours of accepting American and Israeli terms, Iran's armed forces will evacuate all sites devoted to the mining, processing or storage of uranium and

transuranic elements, the development of nuclear fission devices, and the production or deployment of ballistic missiles or military unpiloted vehicles (UAVs). These sites will be turned over to the armed forces of the United States, which will dismantle and then destroy them. Israel and the United States will provide the Iranians with a detailed list of sites to be destroyed. Iran's inventory of uranium, ballistic missiles and military UAVs will be evacuated to the United States.

To ensure the safety of American forces, Iranian armed forces will also turn over ports, airports and other facilities the United States deems necessary to ensure the safety of the forces carrying out the the terms outlined above.

Iran will undertake never to undertake the mining, refinement or production of uranium or transuranic elements, or the development, production or deployment of ballistic missiles or military unpiloted vehicles.

When American forces complete the destruction of the sites slated for destruction, they will leave the areas Iran has turned over to them, except that the United States will retain bases in Iran required to implement a regime of immediate inspection, without warning, of any site where activity Iran has committed not to engage in is suspected. United States forces, on inspection of such sites, may destroy them.

The time for negotiations with Iran ended at 8 pm Washington time on June 12 (4 am on June 13 in Teheran). What needs to be required now of Iran is swift compliance, not negotiation. When Iran is ready to comply immediately with these terms it has only to pick up the phone. Until then the bombing will continue.