

Wednesday's "News in Review" Round-Up
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WEEKLY QUOTES

The Iranian Foreign Affairs Office issued an announcement Tuesday that calls the wording of the Geneva agreement distributed to the media by the White House “invalid...what was published on the White House’s website as facts is a one sided

interpretation of the agreement that was signed in Geneva" — Marziya Afham, spokeswoman for the Iranian Foreign Ministry. "Some of the wording in the document that was published contradicts the agreement Iran reached with the world powers...One of the reasons the talks between the sides took longer was the Iranian insistence on precision in wording" Afham added. ([Jerusalem Online](#), Nov. 27, 2013)

"Today the world has become a much more dangerous place because the most dangerous regime in the world has taken a significant step toward attaining the most dangerous weapon in the world," — Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, who also denounced the interim Iranian nuclear pact signed by the P5+1 as a "historic mistake" that does little to reverse Iran's nuclear ambitions. Netanyahu repeated a reference to his own red line regarding Iran's nuclear ambitions plainly stating, "Israel will not allow Iran to develop a military nuclear capability." ([Washington Post](#), Nov. 24, 2013)

The Geneva pact signed by the P5+1 "brings us to a nuclear arms race." — Israeli Foreign Minister Avigdor Lieberman. Lieberman added that "The world has to understand that this is the biggest diplomatic victory Iran has had in recent years...there's no doubt the agreement recognizes Iran's right to enrich uranium." ([Washington Post](#), Nov. 24, 2013)

"No, there is no right to enrich...we do not recognize a right to enrich. It is clear in the NPT, in the Non-Proliferation Treaty, it's very, very clear, that there is no right to enrich." — U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry insisted. After the agreement had been signed, there was a disagreement over one of its central provisions: the right to enrich uranium. ([CBN News](#), Nov. 25, 2013)

At odds with Kerry, Iran's President Hassan Rouhani sees the right to enrich uranium as the keystone of the agreement. "No matter what interpretations are given, Iran's right to enrichment has been recognized in the text of the agreement," — Rouhani declared. "And for that reason, I announce to the Iranian nation that Iran's enrichment activity will continue as before." ([CBN News](#), Nov. 25, 2013)

"Since 2002...the Agency has become increasingly concerned about the possible existence in Iran of undisclosed nuclear related activities involving military related organizations, including activities related to the development of a nuclear payload for a missile." — IAEA report, published Nov. 14, 2013, detailing the current state of Iran's nuclear program. ([Weekly Standard](#), Nov. 26, 2013)

"Journalists and headline writers who characterized Geneva as a "freeze" or "halt" of Iran's nuclear program have a strange definition of these words. When Jack Lord or Telly Savalas caught up with a bad guy, pulled a revolver and yelled "freeze" or

"halt," the culprit wasn't being told to "keep moving, just more slowly"; he was being told to stop—or else. Geneva, however, does not stop Iran's nuclear program. Under the agreement, thousands of centrifuges will continue to spin and produce enriched uranium, though within defined limits...few commentators have focused on what may be its most consequential aspect—an apparent promise that, at the end of the process, Iran may eventually be able to enrich as much uranium as it wants, to whatever level it wants...Washington and its partners are on record now agreeing that the final accord will allow Iran to enrich uranium, putting the last nail in the coffin of six United Nations Security Council resolutions calling on Iran to suspend its enrichment activities, even temporarily; and that any limitations the final agreement may impose will not be final at all but only for "a period to be agreed upon."— Robert Satloff, executive director of the Washington Institute for Near East Policy ([New Republic](#), Nov. 25, 2013)

"On the nuclear question specifically, I don't see this as stage one. In my view, there will never be a final agreement. What the administration just initiated was, rather, a long and expensive process by which the West pays Iran to refrain from going nuclear. We are, in essence, paying Ayatollah Khamenei to negotiate with us. We just bought six months. What was the price?...I see the deal as a deceptively pleasant way station on the long and bloody road that is the American retreat from the Middle East...we shredded the six United Nations Security Council resolutions that ordered the Islamic Republic to abandon all enrichment and reprocessing activities." — Michael Doran, Senior Fellow at the Saban Center for Middle East Policy at the Brookings Institution ([Brookings](#), Nov 24, 2013)

Canada is "deeply skeptical" of the weekend deal to curb Iran's nuclear program — Canadian Foreign Affairs Minister John Baird commented Sunday. Baird added that "We have made-in-Canada foreign policy...We think past actions best predict future actions, and Iran has defied the United Nations Security Council and defied the International Atomic Energy Agency. Simply put: Iran has not earned the right to have the benefit of the doubt." ([Globe & Mail](#), Nov. 24, 2013)

"There may be light at the end of the tunnel, but it's a long tunnel," — said a senior U.S. Treasury official in response to the announcement of sanctions relief for Iran negotiated in Geneva over the weekend. "So any business, any bank, any broker, anybody who thinks it's open season to go into Iran today I think is sorely mistaken. We will enforce these sanctions and if someone thinks...it's time to jump back into Iran with both feet, they're just wrong." ([Wall Street Journal](#), Nov. 26, 2013)

"As we go forward...the resolve of the United States will remain firm, as will our commitments to our friends and allies—particularly Israel and our Gulf partners, who have good reason to be skeptical about Iran's intentions." President Barack

Obama sought to reassure America's partners in the region during his announcement of the "temporary" accord. ([Wall Street Journal](#), Nov. 24, 2013)

"I think this is potentially a significant moment, but I'm not going to stand here in some triumphal moment and suggest to you that this is an end unto itself," — Secretary of State John Kerry, in a rare moment of restraint following two days of concentrated negotiations in Geneva. ([Wall Street Journal](#), Nov. 24, 2013)

"We, the Jews, collectively rejected God and hung Him up on a cross to die, and thus we deserved the punishments that were heaped on our heads over the last 2000 years." —Anonymous post on the student-run Harvard Ichthus Christian blog website. The website later apologized for the post, stating that its blogs are "intended to be areas of thoughtful dialogue...this particular piece has led to increasing misunderstanding and disinformation about the author's views, the Ichthus, and Christianity...we do acknowledge that many of the claims of Christianity are offensive to those who do not believe it, but we think that much of the offense that has resulted from this article is not the offense of the gospel of Jesus Christ. And for that we apologize." ([Ha'aretz](#), Nov. 26, 2013)

Elie Wiesel, a Nobel Peace Prize recipient, "is one of the world's top Jewish writers and intellectuals, a Holocaust survivor who for decades has worked to keep alive the memory of the Holocaust across the world and is the leading figure in the United States of America on the subject," — statement from the office of former Israeli President Shimon Peres. Peres awarded his Presidential Medal of Distinction to Wiesel in an emotional ceremony in New York on Monday. The President's Medal of Distinction is the highest civil medal given by Israel. It was first presented on March 1, 2012, and is awarded to people who have made an outstanding contribution to the State of Israel or to humanity, through their talents, services, or in any other form. ([Jerusalem Post](#), Nov. 26, 2013)

SHORT TAKES

ALLIES FEAR A U.S. PULLBACK IN MIDEAST — (Washington) America's allies in Israel and Saudi Arabia view the new nuclear agreement with Iran with a mixture of unease and alarm. But for some in the skeptics' camp, the broader concern extends well beyond the preliminary nuclear deal. Their underlying worry is that the negotiations with Iran represent just the latest evidence that a war-weary U.S. is slowly seeking to close the books on a series of nettlesome long-term problems,

allowing Washington to pull back from its longtime commitment to the Middle East. ([Wall Street Journal](#), Nov. 24, 2013)

EUROPE WILL BENEFIT ECONOMICALLY FROM IRAN ACCORD — (Berlin) The European Union stands to reap major economic benefits from the interim agreement with Iran over resolving Tehran's nuclear program. As part of the agreement between the major powers and Iran, key areas where sanctions relief is provided are the lucrative automobile trade and access to its foreign reserves. The French-born Israeli Emmanuel Navon told *The Jerusalem Post* on Sunday, "This temporary relief will benefit European car manufacturers that currently export to Iran, such as BMW, Mercedes-Benz, Rover, Audi, Volkswagen, Renault and Peugeot." ([Jerusalem Post](#), Nov. 25, 2013)

IRAN: CONSTRUCTION WILL CONTINUE AT ARAK SITE — (Tehran) Iran will pursue construction at the Arak heavy-water reactor, Foreign Minister Mohammed Javad Zarif was quoted as saying on Wednesday, despite a deal with world powers to shelve a project they fear could yield plutonium for atomic bombs. France, one of the six powers that negotiated Sunday's interim pact with Iran, said in response to Zarif's statement that Tehran had to keep to what was agreed in the Geneva talks. Western powers fear Arak could be a source of plutonium - one of two materials, along with highly enriched uranium, that can be used for the core of a nuclear weapon - once it is operational. ([Jerusalem Post](#), Nov. 27, 2013)

KARZAI REJECTS CALL FOR QUICK DECISION ON U.S. TROOP AGREEMENT — (Kabul) The Afghan government said Friday it would not be bullied by the United States into quickly signing a security agreement, stoking tensions that could unravel plans to keep thousands of U.S. troops in Afghanistan after 2014. One day after Afghan President Hamid Karzai shocked the Obama administration by telling an assembly of tribal elders and activists that he would not sign the bilateral security agreement until spring, he resisted calls to reconsider his timetable. Through a spokesman, Karzai said Afghans would decide the matter on their own terms and that he has no plans to sign the accord until after the country elects a new president on April 5. ([Washington Post](#), Nov. 22, 2013)

SYRIAN REBELS TAKE OVER COUNTRY'S BIGGEST OIL FIELD — (Damascus) Syrian opposition fighters, including members of the Al-Qaeda affiliated jihadist Al-Nusra Front, seized the country's biggest oil field on Saturday, reports *Al Arabiya*. "Fighters from Al-Nusra and other groups have taken the Omar oil field in Deir Ezzor province after clashes overnight," said Rami Abdel Rahman, the director of the Syrian Observatory for Human Rights. Abdel Rahman said government troops had withdrawn from the field. The loss of the al-Omar oil field in the eastern Deir al-Zor province, if confirmed, could leave Assad's forces almost completely reliant on imported oil in their highly mechanized military campaign to put down a 2-1/2-

year uprising. ([Al Arabiya](#), Nov. 23, 2013)

SYRIA GOVERNMENT CONFIRMS GENEVA PEACE TALKS ATTENDANCE —(Damascus)
The Syrian government has confirmed it will attend peace talks planned for January, but says it is not going in order to negotiate a handover of power. Its delegation to the talks in Geneva will receive direction from President Bashar al-Assad and dismissed the opposition's key demand that Mr Assad play no role in any transitional period. More than 100,000 people have died since protests against Mr Assad erupted in March 2011. Almost nine million others have been driven from their homes, around two-fifths of Syria's pre-war population. ([BBC](#), Nov. 27, 2013)

NEW LAW IN EGYPT EFFECTIVELY BANS STREET PROTESTS — (Cairo) Egypt's military-backed government has issued a law that all but bans street protests by applying jail time or heavy fines to the public demonstrations that have felled the last two presidents and regularly roiled the capital since the Arab Spring revolt. The new law, promulgated on Sunday, is the latest evidence of a return to authoritarianism in the aftermath of the military takeover that removed President Mohamed Morsi of the Muslim Brotherhood in July. It criminalizes the kind of free assembly and public expression that many Egyptians had embraced as a cherished foundation of their new democracy after the 2011 ouster of President Hosni Mubarak. ([New York Times](#), Nov. 25, 2013)

SUICIDE CAR BOMBING IN EGYPT'S SINAI KILLS ELEVEN OFF-DUTY SOLDIERS — (Cairo) A suicide bomber rammed his explosive-laden car into one of two buses carrying off-duty soldiers in Egypt's turbulent region of northern Sinai on Wednesday, killing 11 and wounding 37, security and military officials said. They said the suicide bomber struck when the two buses travelled on the road between the border town of Rafah and the coastal city of el-Arish. The explosion damaged both buses, the officials said. The soldiers belong to the 2nd Field Army, which is doing most of the fighting against Islamic militants waging an insurgency against security forces in Sinai. ([Globe & Mail](#), Nov. 20, 2013)

TRUCK BOMB AT OUTDOOR MARKET IN IRAQ, OTHER ATTACKS KILL 48 — (Baghdad)
A truck bomb tore through an outdoor vegetable market in northeastern Iraq, the deadliest of a series of attacks Thursday that killed at least 48 people, officials said. The explosion in the town of Sadiyah, some 140 kilometres northeast of Baghdad, is the latest in a wave of attacks that has swept across Iraq since April, pushing violence to levels unseen since the country teetered on the brink of civil war in 2006 and 2007. Meanwhile Thursday, a suicide bomber set off his explosives-laden belt at an army checkpoint in the town of Taji north of Baghdad, killing six soldiers and wounding 12, a police officer and a medical official said. ([Globe & Mail](#), Nov. 21, 2013)

THREE PALESTINIAN SUSPECTS KILLED IN RAID — (Jerusalem) Israeli security

forces shot and killed three suspected militants in a West Bank raid on Tuesday aimed at thwarting an attack on Israeli targets, the military and police said. Israeli police spokesman Micky Rosenfeld said troops opened fire on two of the militants in their vehicle, which was found carrying explosive devices and two guns. The military said a third militant was killed in a gunfight that broke out with Israeli forces. Israeli military sources said the militants were linked to a violent, ultra-conservative Islamist movement known as the Salafi Jihadis, which draw inspiration from Al-Qaeda. Militants tied to the movement are said to operate in the Gaza Strip and to a lesser extent the West Bank. The military said the movement has expanded its network in recent months and that arrests of other suspected militants took place earlier Tuesday in other areas of the West Bank. ([Washington Post](#), Nov. 26, 2013)

HALF OF PALESTINIANS THINK PA ERRED IN RESUMING PEACE TALK WITH ISRAEL, POLL FINDS — (Jerusalem) Half of the Palestinians believe that the Palestinian Authority made a mistake when it decided to resume peace talks with Israel more than three months ago, according to a public opinion poll published Wednesday. The poll also showed that nearly 70% of Palestinians believe that the negotiations would not result in an agreement with Israel. One-third of respondents favored peaceful negotiations, while another one-third said that armed resistance was their preferred means. Twenty-seven percent said that they supported a "non-violent, peaceful resistance." ([Jerusalem Post](#), Nov. 27, 2013)

ISRAEL PUSHING FORWARD WITH SETTLEMENT PLANS — (Jerusalem) Plans to build 800 new housing units in the West Bank are moving forward, the Defense Ministry said Monday. The ministry said it had approved an initial planning stage for the housing earlier this month. The approval is an initial step in a protracted bureaucratic process and construction is not expected to begin for months. The approval came as Israel and the Palestinians conducted quiet, behind-the-scenes peace talks. The Palestinians want the West Bank, along with East Jerusalem and the Gaza Strip, as part of a future state and oppose Israeli settlement building. ([Times of Israel](#), Nov. 25, 2013)

FRANCE TO SEND 1,000 MORE TROOPS TO CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC — (Paris) France has said it will send an extra 1,000 troops to the Central African Republic (CAR) as pressure grows for outside intervention to arrest a chaotic sectarian conflict between Christians and Muslims. Jean-Yves Le Drian, the French defence minister, made the announcement a day after the UN warned of possible civil war in the CAR, where lawlessness prevails and armed groups have been accused of atrocities including killings, burning villages and the conscription of child soldiers. ([The Guardian](#), Nov. 26, 2013)

NORWAY OFFICIAL WANTS TO "EDUCATE" JEWS AGAINST CIRCUMCISION — (Oslo)

The anti-circumcision bill in Norway, which the country's foreign minister vows will not become law, is being pushed by the country's child welfare advisor who wants Jews and Muslims to understand that causing pain is tantamount to a sin far worse than violating the Jewish law of circumcision. New legislation on non-medical circumcision of boys under 18 is scheduled to be introduced before mid-April. "With good information about risk, pain and lack of health benefits of the intervention, I think parents from minorities would voluntarily abstain from circumcising children," Anne Lindboe, Norway's Children's Ombudsmen, told the Norwegian *Aftenpost* daily last week. Her solution is simply to perform a "symbolic ritual," presumably one in which the baby will not cry. ([Jewish Press](#), Nov. 25, 2013)

MASTERPIECE LOOTED BY NAZIS INSTALLED AT L.A. MUSEUM — (Los Angeles) The Los Angeles County Museum of Art has welcomed the donation of a Baroque-era painting that was stolen in Italy by Nazis during World War II. The painting looted by the Nazis in 1944 was installed Monday at the museum's galleries for European art after it was returned to its owner last week and promptly donated. The life-size figure of St. Catherine of Alexandria— painted in Italy around 1615 by Bernardo Strozzi — is a promised gift to the museum by Philippa Calnan, the original owner's sole direct descendant. ([New York Post](#), Nov. 27, 2013)

CIA RECRUITED DOUBLE AGENTS AT GUANTANAMO — (Washington) The CIA used a secret base at Guantanamo Bay nicknamed 'Penny Lane' to turn some of Al-Qaeda's most dangerous terrorists into double agents, US officials have admitted. Inmates languishing under Guantanamo Bay's harsh regime were offered cash rewards, "hotel" style rooms and even pornography if they agreed to help the CIA track down and kill fellow Al-Qaeda operatives. The program, hatched when President George W Bush was in the White House, was potentially a huge gamble for the CIA, because of the risks that the "turned" inmates simply rejoined Al-Qaeda's ranks. ([The Telegraph](#), Nov. 26, 2013)

TAMAR PARTNERS REPORT SIGNS OF NEW NATURAL GAS FIND — (Tel Aviv) Stakeholders in a potential new natural gas reservoir announced significant signs of hydrocarbons in the field, based on tests carried out during exploratory drilling trials. Although the partners involved in exploring the new field - called Tamar Southwest - have not announced an updated estimate as to the quantity of gas in the reservoir, before drilling began in August, they released a Tel Aviv Stock Exchange report on Tuesday estimating that the field would contain approximately 19 billion cubic meters of gas. ([Jerusalem Post](#), Nov. 26, 2013)

ARCHEOLOGISTS DISCOVER OLDEST, LARGEST WINE CELLAR IN NEAR EAST — (Jerusalem) A team of archeologists unearthed what it describes as the "oldest and largest palatial wine cellar" ever discovered in the Near East. The cellar was

found in a ruined palace near the sprawling Canaanite city in northern Israel called Tel Kabri. The site itself dates back to around 1,700 BCE and is located near Israel's modern-day winemaking region in the Galilee and Golan Heights. "We found at least 40 large one-meter tall jugs that all hold at least 50 liters of wine, totaling 2,000 liters," said Dr. Andrew Koh of Brandeis University, one of the leading archeologists on the discovery. ([Algemeiner](#), Nov. 25, 2013)

[On Topic Links](#)

[Why Most of the Mass Media Can't Report Honestly on Israel—or Other Middle East Issues](#): Barry Rubin, *Rubin Reports*, Nov. 4, 2013 — Underlying any other factor regarding attitudes toward Israel in the Media-University-Government (MUG) complex is the programmatic and ideological problem faced in honestly understanding and explaining Israel's behavior.

[Iran's Nuclear Program Is Still Growing, and America's Fist Is Shrinking](#): Robert Satloff, *New Republic*, Nov. 25, 2013 — The blockbuster nuclear deal reached early Sunday morning in Geneva between Iran and the U.S.-led coalition is both less and more consequential than early reports suggest.

[The Hidden Cost Of The Iranian Nuclear Deal](#): Michael Doran, *Brookings*, Nov. 24, 2013 — One's evaluation of the nuclear deal depends on how one understands the broader context of US-Iranian relations.

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