

**OVERSIGHT OF THE TRUMP ADMINISTRATION'S
IRAN POLICY**

HEARING

BEFORE THE
SUBCOMMITTEE ON
THE MIDDLE EAST, NORTH AFRICA, AND
INTERNATIONAL TERRORISM

OF THE

**COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES**

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**OVERSIGHT OF THE TRUMP
ADMINISTRATION'S
IRAN POLICY**

**Wednesday, June 19, 2019
House of Representatives
Subcommittee on the Middle East,
North Africa, and International
Terrorism
Committee on Foreign Affairs**

Washington, DC

The committee met, pursuant to notice, at 12:04 p.m., in room 2172 Rayburn House Office Building, Hon. Theodore E. Deutch (chairman of the subcommittee) presiding.

Mr. DEUTCH. This hearing will come to order. Welcome, everyone. The subcommittee is meeting today to hear testimony on the Trump Administration's Iran policy. I thank the witness for appearing today. I now recognize myself for the purpose of making an opening statement. I will then turn it over to the ranking member, Mr. Wilson, for his opening statement.

And, without objection, all members may have 5 days to submit statements, questions, and extraneous materials for the record, subject to the length limitations in the rules.

Mr. Hook, thank you very much for testifying today. This committee has many questions related to the U.S. policy toward Iran, and we welcome the opportunity to hear directly from the Administration.

In recent weeks, relations between the United States and Iran have grown increasingly tense. This committee is fully aware of the many challenges posed by Tehran. Iran plays a destabilizing role in the region by propping up Bashar al-Assad in Syria, supporting Houthi rebels in Yemen, threatening our ally, Israel, and supporting terrorist groups like Hezbollah and Hamas.

Iran also continues to unjustly imprison American citizens including Siamak Namazi and his father Baquer, who is, I would point out, 83 years old and in poor medical condition; Xiyue Wang whose health is deteriorating rapidly; and Bob Levinson, my constituent, who went missing in Iran in March 2007, and is now the longest-held American hostage. To this day, Iranian leaders refuse to acknowledge their responsibility for Bob's disappearance and have not fulfilled promises of assistance in locating and returning Bob to his family.

Congress stands in solidarity with those Americans and others detained in Iran. The Iranian Government's behavior is appalling and my colleagues and I unequivocally condemn its dangerous actions. This committee also has serious concerns, however, about the

Administration's Iran policy, its execution, and its unintended consequences. I have four primary worries about the Administration's policy and I question its coherence, its impact on our international leadership, its effectiveness, and, at times, its recklessness.

First, the objectives of the Administration's policy are incoherent. Today, Mr. Hook, I understand you will say the Administration seeks new negotiations with Tehran based on four pillars: Iran's nuclear program, its expansive ballistic missile capabilities, its support of regional proxies, and its arbitrary detention of U.S. citizens. These objectives are laudatory and worth pursuing.

But on multiple occasions, senior administration officials have expressed aims that are incompatible and sometimes work at cross-purposes with these goals. National Security Advisor John Bolton is a longtime proponent of regime change in Tehran. He continually questions the utility of negotiating with Iran and frequently indicates that the Iranian regime will not be in power in the coming years.

President Trump, regularly, including on a recent visit to Japan, said he is opposed to regime change. He has offered to negotiate with Iran without preconditions and claims that he seeks a deal solely to end Iran's nuclear program. But in a May 2018 speech, the Secretary of State, Mike Pompeo, outlined 12 conditions that Tehran must fulfill, many of which are unrelated to the nuclear issue. So, therefore, there is serious confusion about the intentions of Iran policy and whether Mr. Bolton, President Trump, and Secretary Pompeo are working at cross-purposes or even to achieve the same objectives.

Second, the Trump Administration's impulsive actions are isolating the United States from our allies, which makes it harder to counter Iran's nuclear and non-nuclear behavior. President Trump's withdrawal from the nuclear deal known as the JCPOA undermined U.S. credibility, undercut American leadership, and divided us from our allies. Now I am no great defender of the JCPOA, but the agreement formalized international dialog to address any Iranian violations or flaws in the accord, and by withdrawing the Trump Administration forfeited these mechanisms and frustrated global efforts to contain the Iranian nuclear threat. Furthermore, Iran recently announced that it would increase its stockpile of enriched uranium. Rather than confronting Iranian violations or addressing gaps and sunset concerns in the deal in concert with our allies and partners during negotiations, we instead face the challenge now with a fractured international community. Those divisions also make it harder to rally our allies to address Iran's non-nuclear activities like its ballistic missile program and destabilizing regional activities.

The fact became apparent in recent days. It is highly likely that Iran twice attacked civilian ships in the Gulf over the last month, but Congress would like to see that evidence before stating it as a fact, but these attacks are unacceptable and should unite the international community.

However, as the Administration sought to build a broad coalition to respond, close allies like Germany and Japan responded with skepticism while adversaries like Russia and China signaled their support for Iran and stated that they would continue to develop

ties with the Islamic Republic. Rather than lead a unified international response to an attack on global commerce, the Trump Administration is having trouble convincing even our closest allies to push back on Iran.

Third, despite the Administration's claims, maximum pressure policy is ineffective by the Administration's own standards: deterring Tehran and countering further Iranian nuclear development. Those are the standards and we have not seen success. The approach appears based on this assumption: that faced with massive sanctions Tehran would capitulate, change its policies, and accede U.S. demands; in fact, the opposite has occurred as Iran escalated its regional and nuclear activities and rejected new negotiations.

Sanctions have not compelled Iran to change its regional policies, which is not only my opinion but the assessment of the head of Israeli military intelligence who made that claim several weeks back.

Fourth, it appears there is no process in place to reassess the assumptions underlying the Administration's policy, consider alternatives, and change course. If the current trend continues, the Trump Administration is likely to find a binary choice, back down in the face of Iran's aggressive behavior, or engage in military action.

And rather than force Iran back to the negotiating table, the Administration's policy is increasing the chances of miscalculation, which then would bring the United States and Iran closer to a military conflict. And even more troubling, the Administration seems to be suggesting that military action is covered by the 2001 AUMF, which I remind the Administration there is broad bipartisan agreement that that is not the case.

To reiterate, Congress has not authorized war with Iran. Mr. Hook, I hope you will clarify the Administration's view on this issue. And, finally, I would just close by pointing out that the challenges posed by Iran are too grave, the risk to our international alliances too important, and the lives of our service members too sacred for Congress to abdicate its oversight responsibility and endorse a policy that we do not understand, that confuses our allies, and most importantly that risks U.S. national security.

And with that I will turn it over to the ranking member, Mr. Wilson.

Mr. WILSON. Thank you, Chairman Deutch, for calling this timely hearing. I am grateful that we will be joined later today by the Republican leader, Mike McCaul. His presence underscores how important the hearing is today. And thank you to our distinguished witness, Mr. Brian Hook, the U.S. Special Representative for Iran, for your testimony before this subcommittee today.

Iran has been a persistent threat to the United States since the Islamic Revolution of 1979. The Iranian regime is inherently hostile to the United States, and when the mullahs and Tehran chant "Death to America," "Death to Israel," they mean what they say and they publish it on billboards in English across the country, the same chant of "Death to America," "Death to Israel." The Iranian regime's hostilities to the United States, our interests, and allies around the world has continued unabated since 1979.

Its most recent iteration came in the form of Iran's attack on oil tankers in the Gulf of Oman this past weekend. This latest attack like all other Iranian attacks was not the result of any one policy or another. United States policy did not cause Iran to become the world's No. 1 State sponsor of terrorism, Iran has been engaged in this kind of behavior since the current regime in Tehran came to power.

This kind of behavior is not an aberration or escalation, it is a hallmark of the Iranian regime statecraft. The notion that the Iranian regime somehow would moderate to a point in which it would no longer support such malign activity has proven false. When Iran finally felt the economic benefits of sanctions relief under the terms of the flawed nuclear agreement, did it cut back its support to the malign activity around the world? No. Instead, Iran doubled down on support of terrorist groups and continued racing ahead in developing the ballistic missile program.

It exploited the breathing room paid for by the international community to prop up the Assad regime in Syria and increase its influence in places like Yemen and Iraq. That is part of the reason that the Trump Administration withdrew from the nuclear agreement and reimposed sanctions on the Iranian regime. Initially, the Iranians believed that they could wait out the Administration's maximum pressure campaign by appealing to the Europeans to try to find a way around U.S. sanctions, but they have not succeeded.

Iran's economy is spiraling, contracting at a rate of 6 percent so far this year after contracting nearly 4 percent in 2018. Feeling the squeeze, the Iranian regime has decided to revert to its tried and tested terrorist behavior with the latest attack in the Gulf and its announcement this week of its intention to breach the nuclear deal.

These are both tactics of desperation designed to give wind to arguments that U.S. policy precipitated the Iranian bad behavior. The sanctions against Iran are working. We have already seen some dividends of the Administration's maximum pressure campaign. Reports indicate that Iran has had to slash payments to the fighters in Syria by a third due to the pain of American sanctions. Even employees of Hezbollah have missed paychecks and lost perks.

Iran's cyber units also lost substantial funding, and the IRGC's Quds Force budget has been reportedly cut by 17 percent. At the same time, the United States must prioritize bringing our friends and partners into the fight with us. We cannot and should not do this alone. After all, it was the international sanctions regime against Iran that finally brought the regime to the negotiating table, and we must bridge the divide with our European allies to be fully effective. We must restore deterrence against Iran and that requires the cooperation of our friends and allies in the region and beyond.

Mr. Hook, thank you again for your being here today. We look forward to your service and understand that you have really got a job ahead of you. But your background indicates that you can achieve.

Mr. Chairman, I yield back.

Mr. DEUTCH. I thank the ranking member. I will now introduce our witness, Mr. Brian Hook. Mr. Hook currently serves as U.S.

Special Representative for Iran and Senior Policy Advisor to the Secretary of State. Prior to this appointment, he served as Director of the Policy Planning Staff from 2017 to 2018.

He previously held numerous senior roles in the Bush Administration including Assistant Secretary of State for International Organizations and Senior Advisor to the U.S. Ambassador to the U.N. Mr. Hook managed an international strategic consulting firm from 2009 to 2017, and practiced law at Hogan & Hartson from 1999 to 2003.

We thank you for being here today, Mr. Hook. I would ask you to please summarize your testimony in 5 minutes and, without objection, your prepared written statement will be made part of the hearing record.

Mr. Hook.

STATEMENT OF BRIAN HOOK, U.S. SPECIAL REPRESENTATIVE FOR IRAN AND SENIOR POLICY ADVISOR TO THE SECRETARY OF STATE

Mr. HOOK. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member Wilson, and distinguished members of the subcommittee. I appreciate you inviting me today to testify before the committee and for devoting a hearing to discuss America's foreign policy to Iran.

In my role as the United States Special Representative for Iran, I have made it a priority to stay coordinated with this committee. This administration has implemented an unprecedented pressure campaign with two primary objectives: First, to deprive the Iranian regime of the money it needs to support its destabilizing activities. Second, to bring Iran back to the negotiating table to conclude a comprehensive and enduring deal as outlined by Secretary Pompeo in May 2018 shortly after the President left the Iran deal.

President Trump and Secretary Pompeo have expressed very clearly our willingness to negotiate with Iran when the time is right. No one should be uncertain about our desire for peace or our readiness to normalize relations should we reach a comprehensive deal. We have put the possibility of a much brighter future on the table for the Iranian people, and we mean it.

The comprehensive deal we seek with the Iranian regime should address four key areas: its nuclear program, its ballistic missile development and proliferation, its lethal support and financial support to terrorist groups and proxies, and its arbitrary detention of U.S. citizens, including as Chairman Deutch pointed out, Bob Levinson, who is your constituent, as well as Siamak Namazi and Xiyue Wang and others.

Over a year ago, Secretary Pompeo laid out 12 demands describing the negotiated outcomes that we seek. We did not invent this list. In fact, the requirements that the Secretary laid out simply reflect the wide extent of Iran's malign behavior as well as the global consensus that is reflected in multiple U.N. Security Council resolutions that were passed from 2006 up until around 2011.

Before we reimposed our sanctions and accelerated our pressure, Iran was increasing the scope of its malign activity. It was emboldened by the resources and legitimacy that the nuclear deal granted. This includes engaging in expansive missile testing and

proliferation. Activities that I can confirm did not diminish after implementation of the nuclear deal in 2016.

And Iran also continued after the deal to detain innocent American citizens. Iran also deepened its engagement in regional conflicts, intensifying, prolonging, and deepening the conflicts. In Yemen, for example, Iran helped to fuel a humanitarian catastrophe by providing funding, weapons, and training to the Houthis. Its support has only prolonged the suffering of the Yemeni people.

Looking at Syria, Iran supported Assad's war machine as the Syrian regime killed hundreds of thousands and displaced millions, creating the worst refugee crisis since World War II. Under the cover of the Syrian civil war, Iran is now trying to plant deep military roots in Syria and to establish Syria as a forward-deployed missile base to threaten Syria's neighbors, especially Israel.

In Lebanon, Iran uses Hezbollah for many decades to promote conflict with Lebanon's neighbors, threaten the safety of the Lebanese people, and imperil prospects for stability. Our pressure is aimed at reversing these trends. Today, by nearly every metric, the regime and its proxies are weaker than when our pressure began. Shia militant groups in Syria have stated that Iran no longer has enough money to pay them as much as they have in the past.

Hezbollah and Hamas have enacted unprecedented austerity plans due to a lack of funding from Iran. In March, Hezbollah's leader, Hassan Nasrallah, went on TV and made a public appeal for donations. Hezbollah has placed piggy banks in grocery stores and in retail outlets seeking the spare change of people.

We are also making it harder for Iran to expand its own military capabilities. Beginning in 2014 when the deal was near completion, Iran's military budget increased every year through 2017. When we put our pressure into effect starting in 2017 and 2018, in the first year we saw a reduction in Iran's military spending by 10 percent. And in March, their most recent budget has a 28 percent cut in defense spending and that includes a 17 percent cut for IRGC funding.

The IRGC cyber command is now low on funding and the IRGC has told Iraq's Shia militia groups that they need to start looking for new sources of revenue. Our pressure campaign is working. It is making Iran's violent and expansionist foreign policy cost-prohibitive. And I would say that our policy at its core is an economic and diplomatic one, but Iran has not responded to this in a diplomatic fashion. It has responded to it with violence and we very much believe that Iran should meet diplomacy with diplomacy, not with terror, bloodshed, and extortion. Our diplomacy, our economic pressure and diplomatic isolation do not entitle Iran to undertake violence against any nation or to threaten maritime security.

Happy to wrap it up there unless you would like me to finish. I want to be respectful of the time limit.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Hook follows:]

**Testimony before the House Foreign Affairs Subcommittee on Middle East,
North Africa, and International Terrorism**

**Special Representative Brian H. Hook
Wednesday, June 2019**

Chairman Deutch, Ranking Member Wilson, distinguished Members of the Subcommittee, thank you for inviting me to testify today, and thank you for devoting a hearing to discuss America's foreign policy to Iran.

This Administration has implemented an unprecedented pressure campaign with two primary objectives: First, to deprive the Iranian regime of the money it needs to support its destabilizing activities. Second, to bring Iran to the negotiating table.

President Trump and Secretary Pompeo have expressed very clearly the United States' willingness to negotiate with Iran when the time is right. No one should be uncertain about our desire for peace or our readiness to normalize relations should we reach a comprehensive deal. We have put the possibility of a much brighter future on the table for the Iranian people, and we mean it.

The comprehensive deal we seek with the Iranian regime should address four key areas: its nuclear program, its expansive ballistic missile capabilities, its support to regional proxies, and its arbitrary detention of U.S. citizens including, Mr. Chairman, Bob Levinson, who is your constituent, as well as Siamak Namazi, Xiyue Wang, and others.

Over a year ago, Secretary Pompeo laid out 12 points. We did not invent this list. In fact, the requirements Secretary Pompeo laid out reflect the wide extent of Iran's malign behavior as well as the global consensus prior to the Iran deal.

Before we re-imposed sanctions and accelerated our pressure, Iran was increasing the scope of its malign activity across these areas. This includes engaging in expansive missile testing, which I can confirm did not diminish after implementation of the nuclear deal in 2016, as well as the continued arbitrary detention of foreign nationals.

Iran also deepened its engagement in regional conflicts.

In Yemen, Iran helped fuel a humanitarian catastrophe by providing funding, weapons, and training to the Houthis. Its support has done nothing but prolong suffering. In Syria, Iran supported Assad's brutal war machine as the Syrian regime killed hundreds of thousands and displaced millions. Under the cover of the Syrian civil war, Iran is now trying to plant military roots in Syria and establish a new strategic forward operating base to threaten Syria's neighbors, including Israel.

In Lebanon, Iran uses Hizballah to provoke conflict with Lebanon's neighbors, threaten the safety of the Lebanese people, and imperil prospects for stability.

Our pressure is aimed at reversing these trends. Today, by nearly every measure, the regime and its proxies are weaker than when our pressure began.

Shia militant groups in Syria have stated that Iran no longer has enough money to pay them as much as they have in the past. Hizballah and Hamas have enacted unprecedented austerity plans due to a lack of funding from Iran. In March, Hizballah's leader Hassan Nasrallah went on TV and said Hizballah needed public support to sustain its operations. Today, Hizballah has placed donation boxes in some small businesses asking the public for spare change.

We are also making it harder for Iran to expand its own military capabilities. Beginning in 2014, Iran's military budget increased every year through to 2017, when it hit nearly \$14 billion. However, from 2017 to 2018, when our pressure went into effect, we saw a reduction in military spending of nearly 10 percent. Iran's 2019 budget, which was released in March, called for even steeper cuts, including a 28 percent cut to their defense budget and a 17 percent cut for IRGC funding. The IRGC's cyber command is now low on cash, and the IRGC has told Iraq's Shia militia groups that they should start looking for new sources of revenue.

Our pressure is raising the costs of Iran's behavior. It is making Iran's expansionist and revolutionary foreign policy cost prohibitive.

Our policy is at its core an economic and diplomatic one. Recently, however, Iran has responded to it with violence. Iran should meet diplomacy with diplomacy, not with terror, bloodshed, and extortion. Our diplomacy does not entitle Iran to take violent action against any nation or to threaten maritime security.

I want to say a few words about Iran's recent hostile acts, including the attacks last week in the Gulf of Oman. Iran was responsible for the recent attacks at the Port of Fujairah as well as the assault on two oil tankers in the Gulf of Oman. This Administration does not seek conflict with Iran. We have been equally clear to the regime that we will defend our citizens, forces, and interests, including against attacks by Iran or its proxies. We stand with our partners and allies to safeguard global commerce and regional stability. It is vital that we and other nations protect the ability of all vessels to safely navigate the Strait of Hormuz.

While threatening maritime shipping and plotting attacks against U.S. forces and interests, the Islamic Republic is also engaging in its longstanding practice of nuclear extortion to deter the Administration's maximum pressure campaign. This week's announcement that Iran is expanding its uranium enrichment reminds us of the fatal flaws of the Iran nuclear deal. Iran's nuclear threats are made possible by a bad deal that left Iran's nuclear capabilities largely intact. We must learn from past mistakes and demand Iran's complete denuclearization in any new deal.

Looking forward, our pressure will continue to deny Iran access to the revenue streams it needs to destabilize the region. As we raise the costs of Iran's expansionism and foreclose the possibility of maintaining the status quo, we seek a comprehensive deal that sets our two nations on a new trajectory toward a far more peaceful and stable relationship.

Chairman Deutch, Ranking Member Wilson, and other Members of this Subcommittee, I thank you again for the opportunity to testify before you. I welcome the opportunity to answer your questions.

Mr. DEUTCH. Thank you, Mr. Hook. We appreciate your yielding back and appreciate your testimony. I will start the questions.

Mr. Hook, the Iraq War was not that long ago. I was not in Congress when the Bush Administration was making its claims about weapons of mass destruction. Many of us were not there then, but John Bolton was. As Undersecretary of State for Arms Control, Bolton made misleading or false statements about biological weapons in Cuba, weapons in Syria, and of course about Iraq's development and stockpile of WMDs.

Before entering the White House, he advocated for preemptive strikes against North Korea and Iran. So you can understand why many of us are uneasy when we read articles that quote former U.S. intel officials about shoe-horning intelligence to fit a certain policy or former State Department officials saying, "The pattern that I have seen with Bolton then and subsequently is that he has established quite a track record of cherry picking intelligence information that serves whatever case he is going to make."

Mr. Hook, I know Mr. Bolton is not the only one driving policy, but I am trying to lay out exactly why, despite our strong desire to take the Iran threat seriously and stop Iran's dangerous activities, there are legitimate concerns about taking the Administration at its word. I appreciate in your testimony that the policy is to avoid conflict, but there are a lot of people who fear that the policy is to provoke Iran so the U.S. has no choice but to respond. And our job here in Congress is to make sure that we do not put U.S. men and women in harm's way without a darn good national security reason.

So when Secretary Pompeo lists recent attacks, "instigated by the Islamic Republic of Iran and its surrogates against American and allied interests," and includes a bombing in Kabul that the Taliban had already taken responsibility for—and nearly every expert is surprised by the claim—we as elected representatives of the American people deserve to know what is behind the claim.

Secretary Pompeo told the Senate Foreign Relations Committee and I quote, "There is no doubt there is a connection between the Islamic Republic of Iran and al-Qaida. Period. Full stop. The factual question with respect to Iran's connections to al-Qaida is very real. They have hosted al-Qaida. They have permitted al-Qaida to transit their country."

I would refer you, Mr. Hook, to the 2001 Authorization for the Use of Military Force in which it says, "The President is authorized to use all necessary and appropriate force against those nations, organizations, or persons he determines planned, authorized, committed, or aided the terrorist attacks that occurred on September 11th, 2001, or harbored such organizations or persons in order to prevent future acts of international terrorism against the United States by such nations, organizations, or persons."

Mr. Hook, is the Administration preparing to tell Congress that it has the authority to launch military action against Iran because one of Osama bin Laden's sons has been living in Iran?

Mr. HOOK. May I first start with the intelligence that you mentioned. I think, last weekend, the House Intelligence Committee chairman said that the evidence of Iran's responsibility for the at-

tacks is, “very strong and compelling.” There is no cherry picking—

Mr. DEUTCH. No, I understand.

Mr. HOOK. Yes.

Mr. DEUTCH. But I would ask the question again. Are we—the concern obviously is that some of the statements that I have read suggest that the Administration is prepared to say that it has the authority to launch military action against Iran because under the 2001 AUMF because one of Osama bin Laden’s sons has been living there. How about because there are former al-Qaida members living in or transiting through Iran? Is that enough to justify a reliance in the 2001 AUMF to take military action against Iran?

Mr. HOOK. Well, I am happy to answer the question. I just want to first underline as I said in my opening statement that we are not—

Mr. DEUTCH. I understand the policy. I appreciate that.

Mr. HOOK. No, I am saying we are not seeking military action.

Mr. DEUTCH. I am grateful for that.

Mr. HOOK. Right.

Mr. DEUTCH. I am just talking about the concerns that we have based on the statements that have been made. Is the Administration preparing to tell Congress that it has the authority to launch military action against Iran because there is direct evidence of Iran having operational control over al-Qaida?

Mr. HOOK. If the use of military force is necessary to defend U.S. national security interests, we will do everything that we are required to do with respect to congressional war powers and we will comply with the law.

Mr. DEUTCH. I understand and I appreciate that. I would just ask again. Is there, based on what I have laid out and the statements made by the Secretary and the National Security Advisor, is it—do you believe that the Administration could launch an attack against Iran under the 2001 AUMF?

Mr. HOOK. This is something which the Office of the Legal Advisor can give you an opinion on if you would like to submit it. That is a legal question.

Mr. DEUTCH. Well, we will submit that. In the meantime, I would just remind you, Mr. Hook, Article I, Section 8 of the Constitution grants Congress the power to declare war. I would ask that you remind the President and the National Security Advisor and the Secretary of State of that.

And, finally, in my remaining seconds, I appreciate you raising Bob Levinson in your testimony. I just have one more simple question. What exactly is the Administration doing to help bring Bob Levinson home?

Mr. HOOK. When we were in the Iran nuclear deal, the last meeting of the Joint Commission, which is the members plus the EU, I was in Vienna and I requested a meeting with Iran’s deputy foreign minister. And I raised the cases of all of the American citizens who are being unjustly and arbitrarily detained in Iran, I demanded their release. I asked for an update for each of them.

We have our Special Envoy Ambassador Robert O’Brien who is working his entire life, his professional life is devoted to this, trying to bring Americans home. We are completely committed to this.

What we have demanded is that Iran release these citizens. They are innocent and they need to be released. They know that. Conversations with the foreign ministry, which is often in the dark in these matters, not always very fruitful, but we are pursuing every avenue possible.

Mr. DEUTCH. Thank you, Mr. Hook.

Mr. Wilson.

Mr. WILSON. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

And, Mr. Hook, Iran's ballistic missile program continues to advance because of the assistance of Chinese proliferators. While the State Department has taken steps to curb this proliferation, most recently sanctioning these individuals on May 22d, they have shown adeptness at circumventing previous restrictions and continuing to support Iran's missile arsenal.

Beyond the most recent sanctions, can you elaborate on the efforts undertaken by the Administration to counter Chinese weapons proliferation to Iran?

Mr. HOOK. We have made it very clear to the Chinese both publicly and privately that we will sanction any sanctionable activity. And I think nations around the world know that we have undertaken this campaign of diplomatic isolation and economic pressure with great seriousness of purpose, and I think as a consequence we are seeing historic levels of compliance with American sanctions, especially the oil sanctions.

So we have now zeroed out Iran's exports of Iranian crude oil and we are confident that nations are going to comply with that. Whether it is an arms embargo, Iran is still under an arms embargo, I will remind the committee that that embargo expires in 17 months under U.N. Security Council resolution 2231 which memorialized this deal. It also lifts the travel ban on General Qasem Soleimani.

And so, we need to be looking ahead. I went up to the U.N. Security Council and briefed the entire Council in early May to talk about the concerns we have about provisions that are going to start expiring. The world's leading State sponsor of terrorism should not have an arms embargo lifted, but that is the path that we are on. In October 2020 the arms embargo expires and so do some of the travel bans.

So, we think it is—that is one of the reasons why we thought it was prudent to leave the deal. It puts us in a much better position to sanction arms embargo violations and we are committed to doing that.

Mr. WILSON. In line with that, on June the 12th, Iranian-backed Houthi rebels launched a cruise missile at Abha International Airport in Saudi Arabia, wounding 26 civilians. You have previously stated that Tehran will be held accountable for the attacks of its proxies. How will the United States hold Tehran accountable for the Houthi rebels increased aggression against civilian targets?

Mr. HOOK. Well, we have been certainly trying to improve the competencies and the capabilities of our partners in the region who are on the front lines of Iranian aggression so that if they are attacked—and the Saudi East-West pipeline was attacked. You had a Saudi tanker attacked, an Emirati tanker, a Norwegian tanker, that investigation for some of those countries is still ongoing.

We very much support these countries and their right to defend when attacked, especially by Houthi rebels. Iran, the Islamic Republic of Iran has spent hundreds of millions of dollars organizing, training, and equipping the Houthis to fight at a level beyond which makes any normal sense and it has prolonged and intensified the conflict.

So we certainly would like to see a political solution so that we can bring the fighting to an end and end the humanitarian catastrophe in Yemen. Iran has been a key player on this and Iran is playing a very long game in Yemen. They would very much like to do in Yemen what they have been able to do in Lebanon and to use the Houthis in the same models that they have used Hezbollah in Lebanon.

And so, we are looking very closely at that. And we have now had half a dozen attacks, Mr. Ranking Member, you mentioned one of them. We have had a half a dozen attacks in roughly about the last month and a half, and this is why we decided to enhance our force posture in the region so that we can reestablish deterrence.

Mr. WILSON. And with the half dozen attacks, and now recently this week the United Kingdom and Saudi Arabia have identified that the United States' assessment of Iran's responsibility is clear, and additionally German Chancellor Angela Merkel has said there is strong evidence Iran is to be blamed for the attacks. Is there any more that you can share with us about identification?

Mr. HOOK. You are right and it is important to highlight that. I mentioned earlier the chairman of the House Intelligence Committee identifying Iran, but you have also had Chancellor Merkel, the U.K. foreign minister, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia has also done that.

I can just add some new information to this. Our intelligence confirms that Iranian vessels, operating in and around the Strait of Hormuz on June 12th and 13th, approached both the Front Altair and the Kokuka Courageous before each vessel suffered explosions. We assess this activity as consistent with an Iranian operation to attach limpet mines to the vessels. I can also say that a senior IRGC official confirmed that personnel, IRGC personnel had completed two actions.

So we are going to keep doing what we can to declassify intelligence without compromising sources and methods, but those who have been able to see the intelligence, and you have mentioned many of those people, all come away without any question that Iran is behind these attacks.

Mr. WILSON. Thank you very much.

Mr. HOOK. Thank you, sir.

Mr. DEUTCH. Thank you, Mr. Wilson. And we are joined by the chairman and ranking member of the Foreign Affairs Committee, and I will recognize Mr. Engel for 5 minutes.

Mr. ENGEL. Thank you, Chairman Deutch and Ranking Member Wilson. Thank you for calling this hearing. And, Special Representative Hook, thank you for appearing here today.

I have been among the biggest critics of the Tehran regime in Congress. I did not vote for the JCPOA because I felt it did not prevent Iran from having nuclear weapons, it only postponed it. I did not like the fact that they would be awash with cash to continue

their terrorist activities. Iran is the world's most prolific State sponsor of terrorism. Its support for the Assad regime, its abysmal record on human rights, its imprisonment of Americans, and all this harmful behavior has isolated Iran and made them a threat to our security and that of our allies and partners.

These destabilizing and dangerous behaviors must end and, frankly, Iran's recent attacks on tankers in the Strait of Hormuz and the Gulf of Oman are setting the region on a course to a war. We obviously need to de-escalate this situation before the worst happens. However, the Administration's most recent steps seem to be pushing more toward confrontation than negotiation. The carrier group, rushing through the arms sale to Saudi Arabia—and we did a lot of work on that in this committee last week—coming up with a phony emergency to circumvent Congress and get these missiles to Saudi Arabia, putting more boots on the ground for supposedly defensive reasons, all framed by increasingly belligerent rhetoric, it does bother me because we should be trying to prevent confrontation.

So I want to tell you what I see, Mr. Hook. I see a growing risk of miscalculation. I see more and more scenarios that could spark a conflict that could lead to the United States stumbling into war. And what I would like to hear from the Administration is the clearest possible statement that the United States is not looking for war with Iran and how we can get Iran back to the negotiating table.

And if we cannot hear that from the Administration, I want to make it very clear, Mr. Hook, that military action against Iran without the approval of Congress is absolutely not an option. Congress has coequal powers under the Constitution and, you know, we went through 20 years of going along with wars because we were told certain things were a fact when in fact they were not.

So I think that the Congress has to play a major role and the AUMF of 2001 has no relevance to the situation with Iran today. And I will resist the Administration using that as an excuse to go to war. If the Administration sees a threat that requires military force against Iran, your first stop is right here on Capitol Hill. There is no law, no aging authorization from another conflict—that is the 2001 AUMF—that could apply to war against Iran. The administration would need prior authorization from Congress before going to war.

So I want to just make my position very clear and say that my opinions of the Iranian regime have not changed. They are dangerous. They are the most dangerous regime in the Middle East and they are the No. 1 State sponsor of terrorism. But that is not an excuse for the United States to plunge into another war without congressional approval.

Let me ask you this, Mr. Hook. Secretary Pompeo said last week that Iran was conducting these attacks in the Gulf to convince the United States to lift its, and I quote him, “successful maximum pressure campaign.” While sanctions and other forms of pressure have undoubtedly hampered Iran's economy, there is little indication they have changed the behavior of the Iranian Government or reduced Tehran's regional influence. So how would you define success in terms of the maximum pressure campaign?

Mr. HOOK. In my opening statement, I presented a number of things that we are seeing in the region that suggest that Iran's proxies do not have the financial means that they used to under the Iran deal because our sanctions are denying the regime historic levels of revenue. Iran provides Hezbollah, Mr. Chairman, I am sure as you know, 70 percent of its operating budget. That is \$700 million a year. The leader of Hezbollah, in March, had to make a public appeal for donations. It is the first time they have done that in their history.

You have Shia proxies in Syria saying to the New York Times, "The golden days are gone and they are never coming back. Iran does not have the money that it used to." I mentioned there has been a 28 percent cut to Iran's military budget, in March. During the Iran nuclear deal, Iran's military spending reached record levels.

So our sanctions are working and they are denying the regime the revenue that it otherwise spend in with on Hamas, Palestinian Islamic Jihad, Hezbollah, Shia proxies in Syria, Iraq, the Houthis in Yemen, underground groups in Bahrain. And so that is a very good thing. It is also the case that Iran has never come to the negotiating table in its 40-year history without pressure. And prior administrations have—sorry.

Mr. ENGEL. No, no. I am sorry. I did not mean to cut you off. But I want to—it is in reference to what you are saying now. So, is our ultimate goal or is the Administration's ultimate goal to compel Iran to negotiate and does U.S. strategy match the intelligence community's assessment on how to get Iran to negotiate?

Mr. HOOK. It does. It does.

Mr. ENGEL. It does. OK.

Well, thank you, Mr. Chairman. I think my time is out.

Mr. DEUTCH. Thank you, Chairman Engel.

Ranking Member McCaul, you are recognized.

Mr. MCCAUL. Well, thank you, Mr. Chairman and Ranking Member. I have a very brief statement and I have a couple questions.

Just last week, Norwegian and Japanese oil tankers lawfully traversing the Gulf of Oman were attacked by Iran. We have all seen the evidence for ourselves. This was Iran's second attack on international shipping in weeks. Moreover, Iran attempted to shoot down a U.S. surveillance drone in the area. These attacks were no coincidence within days of the Administration's announcement they would no longer grant waivers for Iranian oil. Tehran responded with threats to protect and defend Iran's waterway as a retaliatory measure.

This spring, Iran displayed propaganda on a billboard in downtown Tehran showing United States and Israeli ships being sunk in a battle. The billboard read in English, Farsi, Hebrew, and Arabic, "We drown them all." Total propaganda, not to mention the fact that they fired a rocket at our embassy in Iraq.

Iran continues to flout U.N. Security Council ballistic missile sanctions. They continue to enable its network proxies to wreak havoc. In fact, the top general in Iran called for prepare for war to the proxies. Our general said the threat is imminent. Of particular concern are the Houthi attacks on Saudi oil fields and airports.

The threat Iran poses to the United States goes back to 1979 in the storming of the U.S. embassy in Tehran and has continued with the deaths of 600 servicemen from 2003 to 2011 which Iran bears responsibility for. In May, the threat to U.S. personnel in Iraq was judged so significant that many of our diplomats were evacuated. A few days later, as I mentioned earlier, a rocket landed near the U.S. embassy in Baghdad.

Iran's announcement that it will begin enriching and stockpiling uranium in violation of international commitments should concern everyone on the planet. All these actions reveal desperation on the part of Iran. In my view, the sanctions are working. It is crippling Iran and it is crippling their economy. They are cash starved and Hezbollah now is begging for cash. To me, these are all positive signs. Their cries for attention are a call for action for the United States and our allies.

I believe our maximum pressure campaign is working. We must continue to meet their aggression with forceful diplomacy. And I believe all of us, the Administration, Republicans and Democrats on the Hill, agree that peace is preferable to war. No one wants to see military action against Iran, but rest assured the United States will be prepared to respond to any attacks against our security and security in the region.

My question has to deal with the thousand troops that have been deployed in the region and our military assets and what is the purpose for their presence and are we, do we have any contingency military plans?

Mr. HOOK. Thank you for your statement, Mr. Ranking Member. Yesterday, Secretary Pompeo and I traveled to Tampa, Florida and met with the new commanding general of both CENTCOM and SOCOM. We had very good discussions while we were there. We want to make sure that we are deeply coordinated with the Defense Department across a broad range of issues.

As you pointed out, we have sent about a thousand additional troops to the region. The decision to deploy, to expedite the passage of the USS Abraham Lincoln Carrier Strike Group, was made on May 3d. We started in late April and early May, started to receive very credible and very disturbing intelligence threat streams that Iran was plotting attacks against American interests in multiple theaters. And the President and his national security cabinet were agreement that we needed to enhance our force posture in the region, which we have done.

We think that that has helped to decrease the risk of miscalculation, and a lot of what we were concerned about at the time has not come to pass for the time being. We have not relaxed our vigilance against these threats from various vectors and I think we have put in place the right kind of policy to restore deterrence against these attacks.

What we have seen so far have not been on the scale that we have expected, but that does not mean that Iran is not capable of doing those things. But we have made it very clear that there will be severe consequences if Iran does go down that road.

Mr. McCAUL. I appreciate your message of deterrence and defending our allies in the region and our interests and commerce in

the Strait of Hormuz, which is vitally important to energy throughout the world.

I just want to conclude with this, Mr. Chairman. That in our Department of Defense approps bill that we will be voting on, there is a repeal—you talked about the AUMF and I think it is something this committee if, God forbid, we do go to war with Iran, which I do not think will happen. I think, you know, I think as Churchill talked about, you know, weakness invites aggression. Reagan talked about strength through peace, peace through strength. You are showing strength. But in this DOD approps bill it repeals the 2001 AUMF without a replacement. That would mean, Mr. Chairman, that all global counterterrorism operations worldwide will be unauthorized by Congress. I think this is a very dangerous move. I think we should reconsider that bill that is going to be voted on this week before the Congress. And with that I yield back.

Mr. DEUTCH. I thank Ranking Member McCaul.

Mr. Trone, you are recognized.

Mr. TRONE. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. And, thank you, Mr. Hook, for your service.

Like my colleagues, I am concerned about what looks like deliberate attempts by the U.S. to be on a war footing with Iran. I am not convinced that it is an effective way to bring Iran to the negotiating table, if that is indeed what President Trump wants. But I am also interested in what is our end game. There are roughly 40 million of the 80 million folks in Iran that are on the young side, 25 to 54. They are going to be here a long time and many of those folks have very pro-American attitudes.

How do we seek to work with those younger folks that have a pro-American attitude for a better future for them, yet still hold a tough line with the regime while letting the others know we are open? Thinking long term, five, ten, 20 years down the road would be a better move than just thinking about short term. What are your insights in this area?

Mr. HOOK. It is a very good question. The longest suffering victims of the Iranian regime are the young people of Iran. And whenever there have been major protests, the regime has responded with brutality. And it has been very hard for an organized opposition to emerge in Iran in the way that Solidarity emerged in Poland.

So, in fact, much of the energy that you see in Iran today is through the women's movement and protesting the mandatory, compulsory wearing of the hijab. As you sort of look at our new foreign policy to Iran, it certainly has a diplomatic piece. It has a piece to restore deterrence. One of the most important pieces has been standing with the Iranian people.

I recently, a few months ago, taped a video message to the Iranian people outside of the Iranian embassy, which is on Massachusetts Avenue, and I contrasted how we have taken care, the State Department under its obligations, international obligations has maintained this embassy. The Iranian regime has turned our embassy into a museum of the Islamic Revolution with "Death to America" spray painted in signs around the embassy.

The Iranian people do not believe in death to America. We believe as you said that they are pro-American. And this regime has divided, I think, the Iranian people and the American people in ways that obviously 40 years have been tragic, I think, for the Iranian people. We are going to continue to stand with them. Much of what we are demanding on that list of 12 are the same demands the Iranian people are making. They do not want to see this regime spend billions of dollars to fund Assad, who uses chemical weapons, while they are struggling at home.

We have seen them gravely mismanage their natural resources. I released a report in September of last year. To the best of my knowledge it is the first report issued by the Federal Government documenting the environmental destruction of this regime over the last 40 years. I will give you one example. When this regime came to power there were six ancient dams and seven modern dams. That was in 1979. Today, there are 600 dams that have been built. They are largely job projects for the IRGC, so the elite get richer and the poor suffer, and so we call these things out.

And so, when you look at the drought that has plagued all of Iran, it is compounded by this regime's mismanagement. It is a kleptocracy. It is a corrupt, religious mafia that serves its own interests and robs its own people blind.

Mr. TRONE. Quickly, let's turn our attention to Egypt, the tankers that go and bring the illicit crude oil from Iran to Syria through the Suez. In March, the Wall Street Journal reported Egyptian authorities blocked the crossing of at least one tanker. But in May and June, there has been a sharp increase of these shipments of oil despite the escalation of sanctions. Has Egypt become less cooperative in its efforts to prevent illicit Iranian oil shipments from passing through the canal? And in State's view, does Egypt have an obligation to prevent the oil shipments passing through the Canal?

Mr. HOOK. You have asked the right question. It is a very good question. I have made trips to Egypt, Secretary Pompeo has, my colleagues on the National Security Council have traveled there, to discuss the very issues that you have raised. Egypt does have to administer the Constantinople Convention, too, as the operator of the Suez Canal. It has certain obligations and responsibilities under that Convention.

We have had many discussions with them about that. Now that we have zeroed out imports of Iranian crude oil, any oil that is moving on the waters unless it is going into floating storage or something like that, but if it is leaving Iran and it is not going to floating—and it is going to a country, it is illicit and we have sanctioned it. We have already sanctioned some illicit oil and we will continue to do that.

We have made ship operators around the world to understand that this money, this oil that finds its way into Syria or into Lebanon is IRGC oil. Now that we have used congressional authorities to designate the IRGC and the Quds Force as a foreign terrorist organization, that allows us to prosecute and to hold people criminally liable as a felony the material support to the IRGC and the Quds Force.

So we plan to use the authority vigorously. We have used it vigorously in the context of Hezbollah and we will use it in this context. And we believe there is an opportunity there. We do not believe that any port operator or any ship operator should take on the liability of working with Iranian tankers.

Mr. TRONE. Thank you.

Mr. DEUTCH. Mr. Kinzinger, you are recognized.

Mr. KINZINGER. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

And, again, sir, thank you for being here and for your service. I think it is important at the top of this that we note that when we talk about Iran, we are talking about the government and not the people, two very different things and I think that is important to distinguish.

I think it is interesting in all this, I remember prior to this administration still having concerns about Iranian attacks to troops in interests in the region, so it is not like this is something that has popped up with the election of President Trump. I mean, specifically, in our counter-ISIS campaign there was a lot of worries about what would happen to the re-energized Shia militias in Iraq.

And so, a quick point to the—I think I would say some, not my friends necessarily on the other side of the aisle, but things we hear, the blame America first crowd that use Cuba, for instance, and Venezuela is a great example of how to do governance, first off, 9/11 was not an inside job. The Bermuda Triangle is not aliens. We landed on the moon. Vaccines save lives. And Iran did the attack in the Gulf.

And that is, I think, the biggest thing to understand. You continue to see the conspiracy theorists that pop up that can take any amount of evidence and try to cast blame and say it is a false flag, and usually we relegate those to the very extremes of political discussion. But I think sometimes we are seeing that enter the more mainstream now because, frankly, some people have let politics get in the way of good foreign policy.

And I think another point is, look, innocent Iran is not the result of, you know, meany Americans. The reality is this has been a battle against the United States, our interests, Israel's interests, and our allies' interests for a very long time, for 40 years.

I want to ask you a few questions though. Thinking of Lebanon specifically, is Hezbollah better off with the deal in place or without the deal in place? And I am going to ask a series of kind of quick ones, so.

Mr. HOOK. When we were inside the Iran nuclear deal we were not able to use any of our energy or financial sanctions. The energy sanctions come to about \$50 billion in revenue and that is the amount of revenue that a policy of zero imports of Iranian crude oil can achieve.

Mr. KINZINGER. And well, so, I just was in Lebanon and what I am hearing is Hezbollah is not better off now because of—

Mr. HOOK. It is not. It is not. So, Iran has less money to spend today on its proxies than it did when this administration took office.

Mr. KINZINGER. And how much humanitarian aid has Iran sent to the Houthi rebels in Yemen or to the Houthi population in Yemen?

Mr. HOOK. I am not aware of any aid that has gone from Iran to the Houthis.

Mr. KINZINGER. How many people do we estimate have died in the Syrian civil war, a general estimate?

Mr. HOOK. I believe it is around a half a million who have died in the Syrian civil war and hundreds of thousands have been displaced.

Mr. KINZINGER. Do you think Assad could have survived without the help of Iran?

Mr. HOOK. I think it is a very open question. It is certainly that Iran by—Iran deployed 2,500 IRGC fighters and they recruited 10,000 fighters from Afghanistan and Pakistan and other parts, so that together that is 12,500 troops that Iran organized. They gave Assad \$4.6 billion in lines of credit and billions of dollars in revenue. It would have made a big difference had Iran not been on the field.

Mr. KINZINGER. And I will mention that that was during the existence of the Iran nuclear deal. Approximately, I do not need the number, but generally, do you know how many Americans died in Iraq as a result of Iran?

Mr. HOOK. Six hundred and three Americans were killed by Iran. That is 17 percent of the total casualties during the Iraq War of Americans who were killed.

Mr. KINZINGER. Do you know in the last, say, 20 years how many U.S. military open strikes have we done in Iran?

Mr. HOOK. Zero.

Mr. KINZINGER. Do you—let me ask another. Do you see strong nations that are confident in their future sabotaging oil tankers? Is that a typical kind of thing?

Mr. HOOK. It is not a pattern of behavior we have detected in the region.

Mr. KINZINGER. Has the U.S. ever put limpet mines and sabotaged oil tankers?

Mr. HOOK. No.

Mr. KINZINGER. And let me—I want to ask, mention a quick point about the Iran nuclear deal. So this was actually signed into law in 2015. The year obviously now is 2019. It has been 4 years, and as we all know time flies by, so if you think about that fact it is pretty incredible. So I want to advance, basically, 4 years, so that amount of time ahead today.

So in 2020, the U.N. ban on Iranian arms exports and imports will lift under the Iran nuclear deal. In 2023, so basically an exact amount of time from 2015 to today, again, the U.N. ban on assistance to Iranian ballistic missiles will end, ban on manufacture of advanced centrifuges will begin to expire. Assuming congressional approval, U.S. nuclear sanctions will lift.

And in that time again, 2025, snap back provisions will expire. In 2026, the cap on IR1 centrifuges will lift. The ban on replacing those with more advanced models will expire and restrictions on centrifuge research and development will end. And in 2031, all restrictions lift.

I make that point, sir, for those that think this is some amazing deal that will last perpetually into the future that we are already

halfway to the beginning of this deal starting to expire, and we saw only worse behavior from Iran.

So with that, Mr. Chairman, I thank you. And again, Mr. Hook, thank you for being here. And I yield back.

Mr. DEUTCH. Thank you, Mr. Kinzinger.

Mr. Keating, you are recognized.

Mr. KEATING. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I would like to initially say that, you know, years ago when I was in Iraq, just hours later I did see a rocket-propelled, Iranian rocket-propelled explosive device, take the lives of American soldiers that I was eating with just hours before that.

So this is no question, is no way at all to excuse their hostile activities, inexcusable activities, but I want to just look at your testimony a moment and just ask a couple of questions. No. 1, when you are talking about the non-nuclear activities of Iran, the malign activities, the missile testing, yes or no, the U.S. still had the option for sanctions and other actions even if we continued with the JCPOA, so we did have options absent leaving the JCPOA; is that correct, yes or no?

Mr. HOOK. Bad options.

Mr. KEATING. Yes or no, did we have options?

Mr. HOOK. Bad options.

Mr. KEATING. All right, we had options.

Mr. HOOK. Bad options.

Mr. KEATING. Later on, you are just saying that the decision to perhaps move forward with enrichment is a result of the fatal flaw of the agreement. Wasn't it true that Iran was conforming to the agreement? I have heard no countries say that they were not conforming to the nuclear agreement, abiding by it. And it was only after we tore up that agreement and moved away from a nuclear deal that provided some protection, clear protection, much greater protection from the nuclear threat of Iran, that it was the tearing up of that that was the causal effect, not a fatal flaw that was resulting in that.

And I think I will leave that as a statement because you are not likely to agree with it. But I believe it is true.

And in your testimony, just to get some consistency, you know, in other hearings we have had in our subcommittee and the committee as a whole, we are looking for policies and consistencies and resolve. In the conclusions even of minority witnesses we have no Russia policy. We have no China policy. We have no North Korea policy. We have no Syrian policy.

So, in your testimony, I just want to point out that you said Iran supported Assad's brutal war machine as the Syrian regime killed hundreds of thousands and displaced millions. Could you not say the same thing of Russia, exactly the same thing of Russia's activities?

Mr. HOOK. I am going to leave that. We have a special—

Mr. KEATING. Well, no. Could you not just as a layman, could you not say it?

Mr. HOOK. Well, I want to stay out of Jim's lane—

Mr. KEATING. Well, I do not want lanes here because that is precisely the point. If you do not have policies you can go into lanes that go nowhere.

Mr. HOOK. Oh, no, no. I am happy to answer the question. We inherited the Russian military in Syria when we came into office, and so we had options as we were facing ISIS. The President made as his No. 1 priority the defeat of ISIS. He and Secretary Mattis put into effect a policy that achieved that objective. And so, we are very pleased with what we have been able to do to end the territorial caliphate that existed in Iraq and Syria.

Mr. KEATING. But you said in your testimony as part of the rationale with Iran is Iran supported Assad's brutal war machine in Syria.

Mr. HOOK. Yes.

Mr. KEATING. It killed hundreds of thousands and displaced—I can make the argument that Russia was more pivotal than any country in turning the tide there and more responsible than any country other than Assad himself. I mean, so what is the consistency with Russia? Why are we not dealing with that issue with Russia?

Mr. HOOK. In my statement I did not say that Iran had eclipsed Russia in culpability.

Mr. KEATING. You left it out.

Mr. HOOK. I am the Iran Envoy, so—

Mr. KEATING. OK.

Mr. HOOK [continuing]. I cover Iran. I am trying to make clear what Iran is doing in Syria.

Mr. KEATING. This is the frustration we are having with the Administration. Everyone has their lanes. Everyone speak—you cannot deal with lanes when you are dealing with policy and there is no overarching policy and it is moving closer to conflict in this instance. I mean we are reaching a very serious stage, here.

Can you just explain to me, finally, in the few seconds I have left, what is that thread from the initial authorization to use military force that exists now they have been using? Explain to me the thread of how that could be used in this Iranian situation and the current conflict we are in now. To me, the thread doesn't exist. So explain to me where that thread is.

Mr. HOOK. And could you—what do you mean by the thread, which thread?

Mr. KEATING. The thread that pulls together the authorization to use military force that we are using against terrorists and extremists, currently, how does that apply to Iran? I do not see a connection at all.

Mr. HOOK. We have not used military force against Iran. We have enhanced our force posture in the—

Mr. KEATING. The Secretary said just 2 months ago that that is on the table; that that could be used absent action from Congress. So how—you are here in your lane representing the Secretary who said that that is something they could do. So I want to explain—since you are here and not the Secretary, I want to ask you where is the connection? I see none. I think you have to go to Congress to act in any kind of kinetic actions with Iran, absent our instant self-defense.

Mr. HOOK. I had answered that question earlier for the chairman. I am happy to repeat the answer.

Mr. KEATING. Please.

Mr. HOOK. We will do everything we are required to do with respect to congressional war power—

Mr. KEATING. No, no. I asked—that is not the same question.

Mr. HOOK [continuing]. And we will comply with the law.

Mr. KEATING. Where is the thread? Where is the connection? That is not the same question.

Mr. HOOK. I am happy to explain this as best I can. We received credible threat reporting in late April and early May that Iran was plotting imminent attacks against American interests in multiple theaters. We enhanced our force posture in a defensive mode so that we could protect ourselves if attacked. That is it. That as far as we have taken this and no farther.

Mr. KEATING. So there is no threat in the future that I have heard from you. I yield back.

Mr. DEUTCH. Thank you.

I would just let the members know that votes could be called as early as 1:15. The witness has to appear in the Senate at 2 so we will not be able to come back after votes. If members choose to use less than their 5 minutes, we will be able to get everyone in. I leave that up to you.

Mr. Zeldin, I recognize you.

Mr. ZELDIN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

And, Mr. Hook, thank you for being here. There was strong bipartisan opposition to the Iran nuclear deal in this room. We asked—I asked Secretary Kerry why the deal was not being submitted as a treaty. The reason was because they were not able to get it passed. That was Secretary Kerry's answer to the question here in this room. There are flaws with the Iran nuclear deal that many have acknowledged in a bipartisan fashion as Mr. Kinzinger was just discussing with regards to the sunset clauses that are fast approaching.

The verification regime, we were told by President Obama and Secretary Kerry this deal was not built on trust, it was built on verification. They never read the verification regime. I am a Member of Congress. None of us have read the verification regime that was entered into between the IAEA and Iran. So there are flaws with the verification regime, but we do not even know the full extent of everything that was agreed to.

And then third, all of the non-nuclear bad activities or the malign activities, many which we have gotten into, by withdrawing from the Iran nuclear deal much of the leverage is coming back to the table that brought the Iranians to the table in the first place. I am not surprised at all to see Iran acting out as they are feeling the pressure. They are feeling the pressure from the sanctions. They feel pressure from hardliners within their own country. Some of it is related to the domestic politics, plus they are the world's largest State sponsor of terrorism and they have other ambitions.

Understanding the scope of the malign activities, non-nuclear activities included test-firing intercontinental ballistic missiles. The intercontinental is not for Israel, the intercontinental was meant for us. The Houthis, helping the Houthis overthrow the government in Yemen, the support for the Assad regime, support for Hezbollah, the activities that we have seen beyond just those, and of course

as Mr. Kinzinger often points out, as he should, the killing of United States service members.

We had no leverage left to be able to deal with all these other activities. Some would argue we did have leverage. Well, the Iranians were not at the table. And the conditions may not yet be set to be able to negotiate something in the middle of June 2019, but we are getting there and the strategy is working.

Now I think it is important that you are here to clarify what the Trump Administration's policy is with regards to Iran and I think it is our responsibility as Members of Congress to give you that opportunity to clarify it and certainly not to muddy the waters. I believe that President Trump believes that Iran is an adversary that does not respect weakness, they only respect strength. We cannot be silent not because we want war, but because we want to prevent it.

We have many people in our Federal Government, some might be political appointees, some might be career, who believe in the four instruments of national power, in the diplomacy, information, military, economics. There is a belief that by having the military option on the table that diplomacy, multilateral, bilateral, the information campaign, the economic pressure, are all more effective. The military option is the last possible option. I have spent a lot of time with the President of the United States and we have discussed this topic. The President does not want to go to war with Iran.

The President of the United States does not want to go to war with Iran. But there is a belief in the four instruments of national power that by having the option on the table, it is the last possible option, that it helps make the other aspects of our instruments of national power more effective.

I also wanted to point out something with regards to the Iranian people. There are millions of Iranians who are great freedom-loving people who want a better future for their country and there is no one more motivated in the entire world to have a better direction for their country than those many millions of Iranians who right now—talking about young Iranians and the impact that they are feeling, young Iranians, we are talking about people under the age of 50, 55, people their entire lives and their kids' entire lives have only known this brutal regime that oppresses its own people.

With the brief time that we have left, have there been any ways prior to exiting the JCPOA that Iran violated the letter of the JCPOA?

Mr. HOOK. Could you say that one more time?

Mr. ZELDIN. Before we withdrew from the JCPOA, are there any examples of Iran violating the letter of the JCPOA? For example, assembling additional advance centrifuges which Annex I, Paragraph 61 prevented, or exceeding IR6 centrifuge allowances, or twice going over the heavy water amount that the IAEA acknowledged, or refusing access to military sites?

Mr. HOOK. Yes. I remember when I was in Vienna for the meeting of the Joint Commission, I had raised some of these issues. There have been what I have called tactical violations of the Iran nuclear deal. We have not seen a material breach. The regime has

recently threatened material breach of the Iran nuclear deal. That is the best I can do to answer that question.

Mr. ZELDIN. Yes, I think it is just important to note—and my time is up—that there have been violations of the JCPOA that a lot of people may not be aware of. I yield back.

Mr. DEUTCH. Thank you.

Thank you, Mr. Zeldin. And, Mr. Sherman, you are recognized.

Mr. SHERMAN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

It is a tragedy that the Nation that gave us the first human rights document, the Cyrus Cylinder, a nation that has been at the forefront of world civilization for four millennia is ruled by this regime. We need democracy in Iran, but it will not come from an American military force, it will come from the Iranian people.

There is discussion, Mr. Hook, of possible military action against Iran. Is it the Administration's position or understanding that they need to abide by the War Powers Act which limits the power of the President to deploy our troops into hostilities?

Mr. HOOK. I think we—let me first just say to echo your first point, let's be very clear. The future of Iran will be decided by the Iranian people. I cannot say that enough times.

Mr. SHERMAN. And I would add that the United States has in the past sponsored democracy conferences, reached out through the State Department Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor, and that America can provide some assistance to those working for democracy in Iran. I would like to see us take all the radio broadcasts that I hear in Los Angeles in Farsi and get them retransmitted, very inexpensively I might add, so that the Iranian people could hear the hundreds of different opinions and see the flowering of different ideas and see what a public free debate is like.

But let's go back to the War Powers Act.

Mr. HOOK. As I think I said earlier, we are not looking for military action. We have kept our foreign policy squarely in the guardrails of economic pressure and diplomatic isolation.

Mr. SHERMAN. I understand that and I will point out that if the economic pressure we were imposing was given—if we gave the reason for that being Iran's wrongful actions in Syria, which have cost hundreds of thousands of lives not to mention Yemen, et cetera, and their human rights, we could have stayed in the JCPOA so they would be bound by it and they would still be subject to the same sanctions. But instead, we have pulled out of the JCPOA which, as you point out, Iran may be in material breach of and we will cross that bridge when we get—well, that is, it is important we as the legislative body that we focus on what the legal parameters are.

And I know it is not your intention to invade Iran, but this is a discussion of your legal right to do so, or the Administration's legal right to do so, without Congress. And it is quite possible you will come to Congress under extreme conditions and ask for this or that authority. But based on the authorities that you have now, what is the power of this administration? Are they subject to the War Powers Act?

Mr. HOOK. I am not a War Powers Act scholar. I can only tell you that everything that we do would be lawful and everything

that we are trying to do now is defensive. I cannot underline—there is no talk of offensive action. We are trying—it is a defensive move that we have made.

Mr. SHERMAN. I understand. It is not the position of the Administration that the 2001—and we talked about this earlier that the 2001 Authorization to Use Military Force against those who carried out 9/11 would authorize a war against Iran, correct?

Mr. HOOK. I am not a scholar in this area.

Mr. SHERMAN. Do you take the—did the Islamic Republic bomb us on 9/11?

Mr. HOOK. Did the Islamic Republic bomb us on 9/11?

Mr. SHERMAN. Did the Islamic Republic and one of the entities responsible for the deaths on 9/11?

Mr. HOOK. No.

Mr. SHERMAN. Thank you. I would point out that we have had legal scholars in this room talk about the War Powers Act and those who claim it is unconstitutional have said, however, that the power of the purse is critical and decisive and binding.

And I would point out that we will, this week, pass a defense appropriations bill that contains a provision that we first put in there in 2011 when I offered it as an amendment, and we have been able to get it into the base text so nobody is talking about it because we do not have to vote on it, that says that no moneys can be spent in contravention of the War Powers Act. So if we were to deploy military forces in contravention of that act, we would not only be in violation of that law, we would be in violation of the appropriations bill.

So I hope very much that we work together to change the policy of this regime short-term, particularly with regard to Syria and the Strait of Hormuz, and longer term that we bring democracy to Iran. I yield back.

Mr. DEUTCH. Thank you. Mr. Reschenthaler, you are recognized.

Mr. RESCHENTHALER. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. And thank you, Mr. Hook, for being here today. As a veteran of the Iraq War, I sat face to face in the courtroom with members of al-Qaida terrorists who had made and planted IEDs, and murderers. I saw firsthand the successes and failures of U.S. foreign policy in the Middle East.

While our political, military, economic, and technological advantages are unmatched, Iran remains one of the greatest threats destabilizing the globe. As the world's largest State sponsor of terror, Iran continues to sow chaos in Yemen through the Houthi proxies, continues to fund Hezbollah in Lebanon and across the world, continues to prop up the Assad regime in Syria, and chants "Death to America" in its capital of Tehran.

Mr. Hook, can you explain the larger strategic benefits and goals of the U.S.-Saudi Arabia relationship and the negative impacts of abandoning that relationship as it pertains to U.S. national security interests in Iran?

Mr. HOOK. I think you see our foreign policy emerging quite clearly in Riyadh. The President's first trip overseas was to Saudi Arabia. They had brought together, I want to say, 55 Arab Muslim nations, one of the largest gatherings that anyone can recall. The President spoke. King Salman spoke. And we talked very much about the need to confront extremism and to counter extremism.

And we also want to as part of burden sharing, America, the experiences that you describe, there are so many people who can talk about that in our military, and we are doing everything we can to expand burden sharing. And that requires improving the capabilities of our regional partners so that they can be a counterweight to Iran. And that reduces the burden on us to provide the levels that we have done historically.

And so whether it is Saudi Arabia or UAE or Jordan, Israel, a number of countries in the region, we very much want to see them in a position of strength and in sovereignty. Iraq, we very much want to see Iraq strong, stable, and sovereign. We want the Iraqi military to have a monopoly on military force. We do not want to see the PMF, especially those that Qasem Soleimani organizes, trains, and equips, to be stronger.

We do not need two States within a State. We do not need two militaries within a State. That is what we have in Lebanon. This is the foreign policy agenda of Iran. It is to try to create two militaries and two States within a State and to stoke sectarian identities, catalyze sectarian identities and dissolve national identities. When we talk about how like Iran destabilizes the Middle East, this is what we are talking about. Iran pours sort of this—it adds this religious dimension to political conflicts which has increased bloodshed and suffering.

And so, to the extent that our policy is denying Iran the revenue and a lot of the capabilities it has to support these proxies, that improves the situation in the Middle East.

Mr. RESCENTIALER. Thank you, Mr. Hook. I yield to my colleague from New York.

Mr. ZELDIN. Thank you. Mr. Hook, is it true that in February 2016 and November 2016 that Iran had acquired more heavy water than they were allowed to under the JCPOA according to the IAEA?

Mr. HOOK. I can give you the specific answer to that but we had registered concerns that and I believe—

Mr. ZELDIN. That can be a yes or a no.

Mr. HOOK. I believe the answer is yes that they had increased the stockpiling of heavy water.

Mr. ZELDIN. That is correct. OK.

Mr. HOOK. And we had raised—I had raised that when we were in Vienna. It is a while ago.

Mr. ZELDIN. Is it not true that Iran had acquired more than the necessary amount of IR8 centrifuge rotor assemblies for R&D purposes with 16 times more capacity than the IR1 to enrich uranium?

Mr. HOOK. Our assistant secretary Chris Ford would be able to answer that specifically. I do not have that answer in front of me. We are happy to give you the answer to that.

Mr. ZELDIN. I would like you to know that so if you can also speak to Mr. Ford as well, because you should be able to answer in the affirmative.

Also, Iran, isn't it true that they acquired more—assembled more IR6 centrifuges than they were allowed to under the JCPOA?

Mr. HOOK. I believe that is the case. We have a bureau that does only this—

Mr. ZELDIN. Yes, OK. I understand the point and we had the back and forth earlier. But I think it is important for you to have these answers with regards to their violations during, while we were in the plan.

Mr. DEUTCH. Thanks. The votes have been called. We are going to keep going as long as we can.

Mr. Lieu, you are recognized.

Mr. LIEU. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Thank you, Mr. Hook, for being here. I agree with you that Iran is a malignant State actor. That is a totally different issue as to who is authorized to allow force to be used against another country.

So under our Constitution, does the President have the power to declare war?

Mr. HOOK. I think this is a discussion—

Mr. LIEU. It is not a trick question. Under our Constitution, does the President have the power to declare war? It is just a yes or no.

Mr. HOOK. We are—

Mr. LIEU. OK, all right. Let me make it really easy for you. Under the Constitution, Congress has the power to declare war, correct? It is not a trick question, sir. Have you read the Constitution?

Mr. HOOK. We will do everything we are required to do.

Mr. LIEU. Mr. Hook, have you read the Constitution?

Mr. HOOK. I have read the Constitution.

Mr. LIEU. OK, under the Constitution, the framers gave Congress the power to declare war, correct? It is just a yes or no.

Mr. HOOK. This is—my understanding is that we are here to talk about Iran foreign policy, which I can do. If there was a separate hearing—

Mr. LIEU. Under the Constitution the framers gave Congress—

Mr. HOOK [continuing]. On war powers, I believe we should have—

Mr. LIEU. OK. Mr. Chair.

Mr. HOOK [continuing]. If there's a hearing on war powers—

Mr. LIEU. Mr. Chair. I am going to stop this line of questioning. I am going to submit the U.S. Constitution for the record.

Mr. DEUTCH. Without objection, Article—

Mr. LIEU. OK, now. Let's ask about crafting Iran policy. You would agree, wouldn't you, that in crafting Iran policy, or actually any policy in the State Department, you want employees who have expertise in that subject area; isn't that right?

Mr. HOOK. We have many experts on Iran in the State Department.

Mr. LIEU. OK. And you have career employees that worked in prior administrations both Democratic and Republican and they go through different administrations. It would not be appropriate to remove a career employee simply because they worked in an administration of a different party, correct?

Mr. HOOK. That is a personnel question that I would refer you to the personnel department on that.

Mr. LIEU. It is not trick question. We do not remove career employees because they happen to be—work in a prior administration; isn't that right?

Mr. HOOK. Can you ask the question one more time, please?

Mr. LIEU. OK. You have career employees that serve based on the Administration. They execute that administration's policies. You do not remove them simply because there is a change in administration, right? And we are not on the political appointees, I'm on career employees.

Mr. HOOK. This is a personnel authorities question that I am not an expert in.

Mr. LIEU. So you think it is OK to actually remove a career employee?

Mr. HOOK. No, I did not say that. You are asking me—I am not an HR—I do not work in HR.

Mr. LIEU. I am asking really simple questions.

Mr. HOOK. No, but you are asking an H.R. question. I do not do human resources.

Mr. LIEU. OK, all right. Is it appropriate to remove a career employee because of national origin?

Mr. HOOK. I have to assume that that would be inappropriate, but I am not—

Mr. LIEU. All right, very good. We got you to answer one question. I am going to have this committee give you an email and it is an email that was sent to you on Tuesday, March 14, 2017 from Juli Haller describing a career employee named Sahar Nowrouzadeh. And in the email, she says Sahar Nowrouzadeh is on detail to your office, basically SP, and that she is trying to get her suspended.

And she notes as background she worked on the Iran deal, specifically works on Iran within SP, which is your office, was born in Iran. Are any of those factors relevant in removing a career employee from detail, sir?

Mr. HOOK. This is an email from Juli Haller.

I do not—I did not write this email, so I am just not sure what your question—

Mr. LIEU. Yes. But you did respond saying, "This initial info is helpful." Is it helpful to know that a career employee worked on the Iran deal, works in your office, and was born in Iran?

Mr. HOOK. No, no. Because if you look at the—I am looking at this in real time now. It says, "This official permanently belongs to NEA as a career conditional employee." I asked, "What does career conditional mean?"

Look—

Mr. LIEU. But you said this initial info is helpful. Is it helpful to know her national origin?

Mr. HOOK. Congressman, as you know there is an Inspector General report on this very subject that you are asking about. I am looking forward to the release of that report and it would be improper for me to comment on this matter until—

Mr. LIEU. All right.

Mr. HOOK [continuing]. That review has concluded.

Mr. LIEU. OK, thank you.

So Saudi Arabia is viewed by this administration not only as a U.S. ally but also as a counterweight to Iran in the region; is that correct?

Mr. HOOK. Saudi Arabia as a counterweight?

Mr. LIEU. They oppose Iran.

Mr. HOOK. Saudi Arabia is regularly attacked by an Iranian surrogate.

Mr. LIEU. OK. The U.N. today reported that the crown prince of Saudi Arabia should be investigated for murdering Jamal Khashoggi. Do you agree with our own CIA's assessment that the crown prince ordered the murder of U.S. resident Jamal Khashoggi?

Mr. HOOK. On the subject of that Secretary Pompeo has made it very clear that we are determined to hold every single person who—materially responsible accountable. The Saudi prosecutor has taken important steps toward accountability for the tragic killing of Jamal Khashoggi, but more needs to be done.

Mr. LIEU. Thank you. I look forward to you holding the crown prince accountable. I yield back.

Mr. DEUTCH. Thank you, Mr. Lieu. Mr. Watkins, you are recognized.

Mr. WATKINS. Thanks, sir.

Thanks for being here, Mr. Hook. Does the Administration believe—hold the long-held belief to ensure freedom of navigation throughout the Persian Gulf, Strait of Hormuz, and other waterways?

Mr. HOOK. Yes, it is an important national security and economic priority.

Mr. WATKINS. Last week, the President tweeted, "It is too soon to even think about making a deal. They are not ready, neither are we." What do you believe it will take in order for Iran to begin negotiations, sir?

Mr. HOOK. From the time we left the deal we made it very clear that we want a diplomatic solution to the broad range of threats that Iran presents to international peace and security. We have made that repeatedly. The President has done it repeatedly that he is ready to sit down. Secretary Pompeo said he will sit down without preconditions.

President Trump endorsed Prime Minister Abe making an historic visit to Iran to pursue a diplomatic outcome and to lead the talks. The supreme leader of Iran put out a few tweets that made it very clear that he will not even listen to the President, and then for good measure he attacked a Japanese-owned tanker. Iran continues to reject American overtures for a diplomatic solution, and we have seen no relaxing of that.

And we have made it also very clear that Iran can either start behaving like a normal country or it can watch its economy crumble. And we are committed to driving up the costs of Iran's violent foreign policy.

Mr. WATKINS. Final question, Mr. Hook. The regime in Tehran is one of the world's worst human rights abusers. How does that or does that and how does that weigh into the calculus of our dealings with Tehran?

Mr. HOOK. In September, I put out a report that was released during the U.N. General Assembly and I devoted an entire chapter to Iran's human rights violations. I will give you one example. There was one Canadian-Iranian who founded a, I think it was the Persian Wildlife Foundation. He was arrested and then died in prison.

You have Iranians protest because they want clean air and they want clean water and they want to protect wildlife and the regime responds by killing them. You have women around Iran who are denied the basic dignity. And so, we stand very strongly with the Iranian people, especially Iranian women.

Mr. WATKINS. Yes, we do. Thank you, Mr. Hook.

Mr. Chairman, I yield back.

Mr. DEUTCH. I thank you, Mr. Watkins. I now recognize Mr. Malinowski.

Mr. MALINOWSKI. Thank you. Let me start by echoing the chairman's comments about our hostages, including Bob Levinson whose family are constituents of mine, and I just really hope that we prioritize this diplomatically and not subsume it in a sea of demands that are much less likely to be met in the near term. And now I have a few questions.

Sir, the President in recent days has said that the Iranian attacks on the tankers in the Gulf were very minor. What did he mean by that?

Mr. HOOK. When we were looking at the sort of intelligence that we were seeing—and I do not know, Congressman, if you have seen it yet, but the intelligence that we were seeing suggested attacks, I think, on a very significant scale.

Mr. MALINOWSKI. OK.

Mr. HOOK. And that were also directed at American interests.

Mr. MALINOWSKI. All right. He also said that Iran is a much different country today than it was two and a half years ago when, quote, "I came to office. We are not hearing 'Death to America' anymore," he said. He seemed, and emphasized that his main interest is dealing with nuclear issue. What does he mean by that?

Mr. HOOK. Iran is, by almost every metric, weaker today than when it was over 2 years ago when we came into office. We think that—that is just simply raw numbers and I discussed some of those in my opening statement. And so, it is weaker.

Mr. MALINOWSKI. OK. It is a little—I mean the implication of his statement was that they were a little less threatening, that the policy had been successful. And I am asking because I think there is a disconnect, if I may, between what we hear from different parts of the Administration. When I listen to the President, it seems on most days that what he is primarily interested in is improving on the nuclear deal, which was obviously flawed, perhaps extending the, or eliminating the sunset clause, et cetera.

What I hear from you is very different. What I hear from you is that our policy is to bankrupt Iran until they meet this maximalist set of 12 demands, until they become a normal country as Secretary Pompeo and you just said, demands that include basically cutting off ties with all of their proxy forces in the region, the nuclear issue just one small part of it.

So which is it? Are we going to—are we using these sanctions to improve the nuclear deal or are we using the sanctions to fundamentally change the nature of the Iranian regime?

Mr. HOOK. You have mentioned one quote. I think you have to look at the quotes in their totality. We have quotes, but we also have speeches. And the President has also made a couple of ad-

dresses to the U.N. General Assembly laying out in more detail some of these concerns that you talked about.

Money is the sinews of war. And if we do not go after the money, Iran is able to fund its proxies which then have direct consequences for American interests in the Middle East. Our goal is not—you had said it. I never said that we are trying to bankrupt the regime. I said that we are trying to make their foreign policy prohibitively expensive. And that is the right policy. It would be, I think, diplomatic malpractice to somehow encourage Iran to have more money so that they can spend it on their proxies.

Mr. MALINOWSKI. No, I understand. You are reaffirming your point, which is the purpose of the sanctions is to change their entire foreign policy, it is not just to deal with the nuclear issue.

Let me read you a quote from another speech from Secretary Pompeo who said of the people of Iran, the people of Iran will get to, quote, “will get to make a choice about their leadership. If they make the decision quickly that would be wonderful. If they choose not to do so, we will stay hard at this until we achieve the outcomes

I set forward”—the 12 demands.

So, basically, we are saying to the Iranian people, you have to change the entire foreign policy of your country or we are going to continue these, what you refer to as crippling sanctions. That seems rather inconsistent with where the President is and somewhat hard to achieve.

Mr. HOOK. The President, if you look at what he has said over the last couple of years, he has taken a comprehensive approach to the entire range of threats that Iran presents. The nuclear threat is obviously the one that has the biggest consequence, OK, and so we prioritize that. That does not mean though that we are going to look the other way on the missile testing, the space launch vehicles, the missile proliferation, the regional aggression, the human rights abuses.

And I think one of the traps that the international community fell into was that as soon as you said Iran is in compliance with the deal, it ended the conversation and it obscured all of the ways that Iran has used the Iran nuclear deal to destabilize the Middle East. It made them stronger. It gave them more money. It has a weak inspections regime. It is silent on ICBMs. And it expires.

And so rather than wait for all of these things to come to pass in 10 years when Iran is stronger, we have pulled that forward. But I truly believe that everything we are seeing today is inevitable.

Mr. MALINOWSKI. So if we fix the deal, the sanctions remain in place, is what you are saying, until everything else is fixed.

Mr. HOOK. No. What I have said is that our sanctions have two purposes, and I said this in my opening statement, to deny the regime the revenue it needs to run an expansionist foreign policy and to bring them back to the negotiating table.

Mr. DEUTCH. Thank you, Mr. Hook.

The votes have been called. Mr. Hook needs to get to the Senate, which leaves just enough time for Mr. Cicilline to be recognized.

Mr. CICILLINE. Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Hook, I am very concerned that the actions taken by the Administration over the last 18 months have isolated the United States and brought us closer to war. Since we abandoned the JCPOA, there has not been any perceivable improvements in our position vis-a-vis Iran; in fact, the situation seems to have escalated considerably and we are now isolated from our allies on this point. And I fear that there are people within the Administration who see war with Iran as not only inevitable, but desirable, a position I cannot fathom due to the destruction it would cause.

I want to associate myself with my colleagues' remarks, particularly the chairman's, about the absence of an authorization to strike Iran under any existing AUMF or constitutional authorities. I am not asking you to pose an opinion. I think the text of the Constitution is quite clear.

And with respect to the notion that al-Qaida is the basis, the testimony that Secretary Pompeo made and where he tried to make that argument, it should be noted that in fact al-Qaida and its affiliates are Sunni extremists who consider Shia like Iran's government to be heretics. In a 2018 analysis of declassified documents obtained during the 2001 raid on Osama bin Laden's compound found that al-Qaida views Iran as a hostile entity. So this notion of that being authorization is clearly nonexistent.

But you said in your testimony that where you have made, our strategy is working. Based on what?

Mr. HOOK. I am happy to go over it again with you. I will give you one example. Under the Iran nuclear deal, Iran's military spending reached record highs. In this administration, the first year it was down 10 percent and then starting in March it is down 29 percent.

Mr. CICILLINE. But I guess maybe the question—

Mr. HOOK. That is really significant.

Mr. CICILLINE. The strategy is to achieve what objective? Maybe that is the question.

Mr. HOOK. Our strategy is to get to a new and better deal that we would submit to the Senate as a treaty.

Mr. CICILLINE. OK.

Mr. HOOK. Which is a mistake that the prior administration—we think that the last deal should have been submitted to the Senate and they went around the Congress and they found the votes in the U.N. Security Council.

Mr. CICILLINE. That is sort of rich on the sort of the moment that Iran is about to increase its capabilities to, in fact, develop a nuclear weapon as a result of us walking away from the agreement. But, you know, Secretary Pompeo in May 2018 stipulated a list of 12 behavior changes by Iran that would meet U.S. conditions for normalization. And he said at that time—well, I said at the time it looked like more of a wish list than any actual set of policy proposals or a strategy to achieve them.

But as of today, which of the 12 demands that were articulated by the Secretary have been successfully met in the intervening time period?

Mr. HOOK. I do not have the 12 in front of me.

Mr. CICILLINE. Well, have any of them been met? Let me make it easy for you.

Mr. HOOK. Well, their—the regional aggression, we have weakened their proxies. We have also denied revenues to the regime to fund its missile program and its nuclear program. The regime is weaker today than it was, so it doesn't have the money that it used to, to spend on the areas that we are seeking change in. That is the nuclear missiles and regional aggression. They do not.

Mr. CICILLINE. But has not your argument been all day and the Administration argument their behavior has gotten worse? Isn't that the whole point?

Mr. HOOK. No. Iran, still, even with very little revenue, has an asymmetric capability that terrorists have. The costs of the 9/11 operation were quite inexpensive. That is the advantage that terrorism has today, its asymmetric advantage. And so it is the case that the regime has tens of billions of dollars of less revenue today than when it did before our sanctions took effect. That does not mean that we have eliminated their asymmetric threats.

Mr. CICILLINE. And, Mr. Hook, do you believe, you know, one of the issues that Secretary Pompeo included in his Iran policy proposal related to human rights. And I am curious, do you believe that the President's embrace of authoritarian rulers such as North Korea's Kim Jong Un or Saudi Arabia's Mohammad bin Salman enhances or undercuts the human rights demands that Secretary Pompeo included in his proposal?

Mr. HOOK. I can speak to Iran. And in the case of Iran he has coupled economic pressure with an off ramp for diplomacy. The Iranians have rejected that off ramp.

Mr. CICILLINE. That is not my question. My question is, is the Administration, and the President's in particular, his embrace of authoritarian rulers with a gross disregard for human rights, does that make our demand for human rights concessions from the Iranians more likely, less likely, or no impact? It seems hard to reconcile the two. I am just wondering, as the person in charge of this effort—

Mr. HOOK. Yes.

Mr. CICILLINE [continuing]. Does that have some impact?

Mr. HOOK. I do not share the premise of your question when I look at the sort of pressure that we have put in place on authoritarian regimes. And the President, I think, and I can only speak to Iran, has made very clear that while we do have very strong economic measures in place, he has encouraged Iran to call so that we can begin talks, and our Secretary of State has said without preconditions. And we are also doing this while we are highlighting the human rights abuses of this regime.

Mr. CICILLINE. Thank you. My time is expired. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. DEUTCH. Thank you, Mr. Cicilline.

Mr. Hook, thank you so much for appearing before our committee today. We appreciate it.

Thanks to the members who have come. Members will have five legislative days to submit questions or materials, additional materials for the record. And, without objection, the subcommittee is adjourned.

[Whereupon, at 1:42 p.m., the subcommittee was adjourned.]

APPENDIX

**SUBCOMMITTEE HEARING NOTICE
COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS
U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
WASHINGTON, DC 20515-6128**

Subcommittee on the Middle East, North Africa, and International Terrorism

Ted Deutch (D-FL), Chairman

June 19, 2019

TO: MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS

You are respectfully requested to attend an OPEN hearing of the Committee on Foreign Affairs, to be held by the Subcommittee on the Middle East, North Africa, and International Terrorism in Room 2172 of the Rayburn House Office Building (and available live on the Committee website at <https://foreignaffairs.house.gov/>):

DATE: Wednesday, June 19, 2019
TIME: 12:00 pm
SUBJECT: Oversight of the Trump Administration's Iran Policy
WITNESSES: Mr. Brian H. Hook
U.S. Special Representative for Iran
Senior Policy Advisor to the Secretary of State
U.S. Department of State

By Direction of the Chairman

The Committee on Foreign Affairs seeks to make its facilities accessible to persons with disabilities. If you are in need of special accommodations, please call 202/225-5021 at least four business days in advance of the event, whenever practicable. Questions with regard to special accommodations in general (including availability of Committee materials in alternative formats and assistive listening devices) may be directed to the Committee.

COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS

MINUTES OF SUBCOMMITTEE ON Middle East, North Africa, and International Terrorism HEARING

Day Wednesday Date 06/19/19 Room 2172

Starting Time 12:04 PM Ending Time 1:42 PM

Recesses 0 (to) (to)

Presiding Member(s)
Chairman Theodore E. Deutch

Check all of the following that apply:

Open Session Electronically Recorded (taped)
Executive (closed) Session Stenographic Record
Televised

TITLE OF HEARING:
Oversight of the Trump Administration's Iran Policy

SUBCOMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:
See Attached

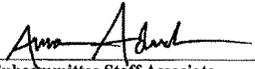
NON-SUBCOMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT: (Mark with an * if they are not members of full committee.)
Elliot L. Engel, NY
Michael McCaul, TX

HEARING WITNESSES: Same as meeting notice attached? Yes No
(If "no", please list below and include title, agency, department, or organization.)

STATEMENTS FOR THE RECORD: (List any statements submitted for the record.)

- IFR - Rep. Ted Lieu*
- QFR - Rep. Ted Deutch*
- QFR - Rep. Colin Allred*
- QFR - Rep. Brad Sherman*

TIME SCHEDULED TO RECONVENE _____
OR
TIME ADJOURNED 1:42 PM


Subcommittee Staff Associate

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS

SUBCOMMITTEE HEARING

SUBCOMMITTEE ON THE MIDDLE EAST, NORTH AFRICA, AND INTERNATIONAL TERRORISM

<i>PRESENT</i>	<i>MEMBER</i>
X	Theodore E. Deutch, FL
X	Gerald E. Connolly, VA
X	David Cicilline, RI
X	Ted Lieu, CA
	Colin Allred, TX
X	Tom Malinowski, NJ
X	David Trone, MA
X	Brad Sherman, CA
X	William Keating, MA
	Juan Vargas, CA

<i>PRESENT</i>	<i>MEMBER</i>
X	Joe Wilson, SC
	Steve Chabot, OH
X	Adam Kinzinger, IL
X	Lee Zeldin, NY
X	Brian J. Mast, FL
X	Brian K. Fitzpatrick, PA
X	Guy Reschenthaler, PA
X	Steve Watkins, KS

ADDITIONAL MATERIALS SUBMITTED FOR THE RECORD

The Constitution of the United States: A Transcription

Note: The following text is a transcription of the Constitution as it was inscribed by Jacob Shallus on parchment (the document on display in the Rotunda at the National Archives Museum.) The spelling and punctuation reflect the original.

We the People of the United States, in Order to form a more perfect Union, establish Justice, insure domestic Tranquility, provide for the common defence, promote the general Welfare, and secure the Blessings of Liberty to ourselves and our Posterity, do ordain and establish this Constitution for the United States of America.

Article. I.

Section. 1.

All legislative Powers herein granted shall be vested in a Congress of the United States, which shall consist of a Senate and House of Representatives.

Section. 2.

The House of Representatives shall be composed of Members chosen every second Year by the People of the several States, and the Electors in each State shall have the Qualifications requisite for Electors of the most numerous Branch of the State Legislature.

No Person shall be a Representative who shall not have attained to the Age of twenty five Years, and been seven Years a Citizen of the United States, and who shall not, when elected, be an Inhabitant of that State in which he shall be chosen.

Representatives and direct Taxes shall be apportioned among the several States which may be included within this Union, according to their respective Numbers, which shall be determined by adding to the whole Number of free Persons, including those bound to Service for a Term of Years, and excluding Indians not taxed, three fifths of all other Persons. The actual Enumeration shall be made within three Years after the first Meeting of the Congress of the United States, and within every subsequent Term of ten Years, in such Manner as they shall by Law direct. The Number of Representatives shall not exceed one for every thirty Thousand, but each State shall have at Least one Representative; and until such enumeration shall be made, the State of New Hampshire shall be entitled to chuse three, Massachusetts eight, Rhode-Island and Providence Plantations one, Connecticut five, New-York six, New Jersey four, Pennsylvania eight, Delaware one, Maryland six, Virginia ten, North Carolina five, South Carolina five, and Georgia three.

When vacancies happen in the Representation from any State, the Executive Authority thereof shall issue Writs of Election to fill such Vacancies.

The House of Representatives shall chuse their Speaker and other Officers; and shall have the sole Power of Impeachment.

Section. 3.

The Senate of the United States shall be composed of two Senators from each State, chosen by the Legislature thereof, for six Years; and each Senator shall have one Vote.

Immediately after they shall be assembled in Consequence of the first Election, they shall be divided as equally as may be into three Classes. The Seats of the Senators of the first Class shall be vacated at the Expiration of the second Year, of the second Class at the Expiration of the fourth Year, and of the third Class at the Expiration of the sixth Year, so that one third may be chosen every second Year; and if Vacancies happen by Resignation, or otherwise, during the Recess of the Legislature of any State, the Executive thereof may make temporary Appointments until the next Meeting of the Legislature, which shall then fill such Vacancies.

No Person shall be a Senator who shall not have attained to the Age of thirty Years, and been nine Years a Citizen of the United States, and who shall not, when elected, be an Inhabitant of that State for which he shall be chosen.

The Vice President of the United States shall be President of the Senate, but shall have no Vote, unless they be equally divided.

The Senate shall chuse their other Officers, and also a President pro tempore, in the Absence of the Vice President, or when he shall exercise the Office of President of the United States.

The Senate shall have the sole Power to try all Impeachments. When sitting for that Purpose, they shall be on Oath or Affirmation. When the President of the United States is tried, the Chief Justice shall preside: And no Person shall be convicted without the Concurrence of two thirds of the Members present.

Judgment in Cases of Impeachment shall not extend further than to removal from Office, and disqualification to hold and enjoy any Office of honor, Trust or Profit under the United States: but the Party convicted shall nevertheless be liable and subject to Indictment, Trial, Judgment and Punishment, according to Law.

Section. 4.

The Times, Places and Manner of holding Elections for Senators and Representatives, shall be prescribed in each State by the Legislature thereof; but the Congress may at any time by Law make or alter such Regulations, except as to the Places of chusing Senators.

The Congress shall assemble at least once in every Year, and such Meeting shall be on the first Monday in December, unless they shall by Law appoint a different Day.

Section. 5.

Each House shall be the Judge of the Elections, Returns and Qualifications of its own Members, and a Majority of each shall constitute a Quorum to do Business; but a smaller Number may adjourn from day to day, and may be authorized to compel the Attendance of absent Members, in such Manner, and under such Penalties as each House may provide.

Each House may determine the Rules of its Proceedings, punish its Members for disorderly Behaviour, and, with the Concurrence of two thirds, expel a Member.

Each House shall keep a Journal of its Proceedings, and from time to time publish the same, excepting such Parts as may in their Judgment require Secrecy; and the Yeas and Nays of the Members of either House on any question shall, at the Desire of one fifth of those Present, be entered on the Journal.

Neither House, during the Session of Congress, shall, without the Consent of the other, adjourn for more than three days, nor to any other Place than that in which the two Houses shall be sitting.

Section. 6.

The Senators and Representatives shall receive a Compensation for their Services, to be ascertained by Law, and paid out of the Treasury of the United States. They shall in all Cases, except Treason, Felony and Breach of the Peace, be privileged from Arrest during their Attendance at the Session of their respective Houses, and in going to and returning from the same; and for any Speech or Debate in either House, they shall not be questioned in any other Place.

No Senator or Representative shall, during the Time for which he was elected, be appointed to any civil Office under the Authority of the United States, which shall have been created, or the Emoluments whereof shall have been increased during such time; and no Person holding any Office under the United States, shall be a Member of either House during his Continuance in Office.

Section. 7.

All Bills for raising Revenue shall originate in the House of Representatives; but the Senate may propose or concur with Amendments as on other Bills.

Every Bill which shall have passed the House of Representatives and the Senate, shall, before it become a Law, be presented to the President of the United States; If he approve he shall sign it, but if not he shall return it, with his Objections to that House in which it shall have originated, who shall enter the Objections at large on their Journal, and proceed to reconsider it. If after such Reconsideration two thirds of that House shall agree to pass the Bill, it shall be sent, together with the Objections, to the other House, by which it shall likewise be reconsidered, and if approved by two thirds of that House, it shall become a Law. But in all such Cases the Votes of both Houses shall be determined by yeas and Nays, and the Names of the Persons voting for and against the Bill shall be entered on the Journal of each House respectively. If any Bill shall not be returned by the President within ten Days (Sundays excepted) after it shall have been presented to him, the Same shall be a Law, in like Manner as if he had signed it, unless the Congress by their Adjournment prevent its Return, in which Case it shall not be a Law.

Every Order, Resolution, or Vote to which the Concurrence of the Senate and House of Representatives may be necessary (except on a question of Adjournment) shall be presented to the President of the United States; and before the Same shall take Effect, shall be approved by him, or being disapproved by him, shall be repassed by two thirds of the Senate and House of Representatives, according to the Rules and Limitations prescribed in the Case of a Bill.

Section. 8.

The Congress shall have Power To lay and collect Taxes, Duties, Imposts and Excises, to pay the Debts and provide for the common Defence and general Welfare of the United States; but all Duties, Imposts and Excises shall be uniform throughout the United States;

To borrow Money on the credit of the United States;

To regulate Commerce with foreign Nations, and among the several States, and with the Indian Tribes;

To establish an uniform Rule of Naturalization, and uniform Laws on the subject of Bankruptcies throughout the United States;

To coin Money, regulate the Value thereof, and of foreign Coin, and fix the Standard of Weights and Measures;

To provide for the Punishment of counterfeiting the Securities and current Coin of the United States;

To establish Post Offices and post Roads;

To promote the Progress of Science and useful Arts, by securing for limited Times to Authors and Inventors the exclusive Right to their respective Writings and Discoveries;

To constitute Tribunals inferior to the supreme Court;

To define and punish Piracies and Felonies committed on the high Seas, and Offences against the Law of Nations;

To declare War, grant Letters of Marque and Reprisal, and make Rules concerning Captures on Land and Water;

To raise and support Armies, but no Appropriation of Money to that Use shall be for a longer Term than two Years;

To provide and maintain a Navy;

To make Rules for the Government and Regulation of the land and naval Forces;

To provide for calling forth the Militia to execute the Laws of the Union, suppress Insurrections and repel Invasions;

To provide for organizing, arming, and disciplining, the Militia, and for governing such Part of them as may be employed in the Service of the United States, reserving to the States respectively, the Appointment of the Officers, and the Authority of training the Militia according to the discipline prescribed by Congress;

To exercise exclusive Legislation in all Cases whatsoever, over such District (not exceeding ten Miles square) as may, by Cession of particular States, and the Acceptance of Congress, become the Seat of the Government of the United States, and to exercise like Authority over all Places purchased by the Consent of the Legislature of the State in which the Same shall be, for the Erection of Forts, Magazines, Arsenals, dock-Yards, and other needful Buildings;—And

To make all Laws which shall be necessary and proper for carrying into Execution the foregoing Powers, and all other Powers vested by this Constitution in the Government of the United States, or in any Department or Officer thereof.

Section. 9.

The Migration or Importation of such Persons as any of the States now existing shall think proper to admit, shall not be prohibited by the Congress prior to the Year one thousand eight hundred and eight, but a Tax or duty may be imposed on such Importation, not exceeding ten dollars for each Person.

The Privilege of the Writ of Habeas Corpus shall not be suspended, unless when in Cases of Rebellion or Invasion the public Safety may require it.

No Bill of Attainder or ex post facto Law shall be passed.

No Capitation, or other direct, Tax shall be laid, unless in Proportion to the Census or enumeration herein before directed to be taken.

No Tax or Duty shall be laid on Articles exported from any State.

No Preference shall be given by any Regulation of Commerce or Revenue to the Ports of one State over those of another: nor shall Vessels bound to, or from, one State, be obliged to enter, clear, or pay Duties in another.

No Money shall be drawn from the Treasury, but in Consequence of Appropriations made by Law; and a regular Statement and Account of the Receipts and Expenditures of all public Money shall be published from time to time.

No Title of Nobility shall be granted by the United States: And no Person holding any Office of Profit or Trust under them, shall, without the Consent of the Congress, accept of any present, Emolument, Office, or Title, of any kind whatever, from any King, Prince, or foreign State.

Section. 10.

No State shall enter into any Treaty, Alliance, or Confederation; grant Letters of Marque and Reprisal; coin Money; emit Bills of Credit; make any Thing but gold and silver Coin a Tender in Payment of Debts; pass any Bill of Attainder, ex post facto Law, or Law impairing the Obligation of Contracts, or grant any Title of Nobility.

No State shall, without the Consent of the Congress, lay any Imposts or Duties on Imports or Exports, except what may be absolutely necessary for executing it's inspection Laws: and the net Produce of all Duties and Imposts, laid by any State on Imports or Exports, shall be for the Use of the Treasury of the United States; and all such Laws shall be subject to the Revision and Controul of the Congress.

No State shall, without the Consent of Congress, lay any Duty of Tonnage, keep Troops, or Ships of War in time of Peace, enter into any Agreement or Compact with another State, or with a foreign Power, or engage in War, unless actually invaded, or in such imminent Danger as will not admit of delay.

Article. II.

Section. 1.

The executive Power shall be vested in a President of the United States of America. He shall hold his Office during the Term of four Years, and, together with the Vice President, chosen for the same Term, be elected, as follows

Each State shall appoint, in such Manner as the Legislature thereof may direct, a Number of Electors, equal to the whole Number of Senators and Representatives to which the State may be entitled in the Congress: but no Senator or Representative, or Person holding an Office of Trust or Profit under the United States, shall be appointed an Elector.

The Electors shall meet in their respective States, and vote by Ballot for two Persons, of whom one at least shall not be an Inhabitant of the same State with themselves. And they shall make a List of all the Persons voted for, and of the Number of Votes for each; which List they shall sign and certify, and transmit sealed to the Seat of the Government of the United States, directed to the President of the Senate. The President of the Senate shall, in the Presence of the Senate and House of Representatives, open all the Certificates, and the Votes shall then be counted. The Person having the greatest Number of Votes shall be the President, if such Number be a Majority of the whole Number of Electors appointed; and if there be more than one who have such Majority, and have an equal Number of Votes, then the House of Representatives shall immediately chuse by Ballot one of them for President; and if no Person have a Majority, then from the five highest on the List the said House shall in like Manner chuse the President. But in chusing the President, the Votes shall be taken by States, the Representation from each State having one Vote; A quorum for this Purpose shall consist of a Member or Members from two thirds of the States, and a Majority of all the States shall be necessary to a Choice. In every Case, after the Choice of the President, the Person having the greatest Number of Votes of the Electors shall be the Vice President. But if there should remain two or more who have equal Votes, the Senate shall chuse from them by Ballot the Vice President.

The Congress may determine the Time of chusing the Electors, and the Day on which they shall give their Votes; which Day shall be the same throughout the United States.

No Person except a natural born Citizen, or a Citizen of the United States, at the time of the Adoption of this Constitution, shall be eligible to the Office of President; neither shall any Person be eligible to that Office who shall not have attained to the Age of thirty five Years, and been fourteen Years a Resident within the United States.

In Case of the Removal of the President from Office, or of his Death, Resignation, or Inability to discharge the Powers and Duties of the said Office, the Same shall devolve on the Vice President, and the Congress may by Law provide for the Case of Removal, Death, Resignation or Inability, both of the President and Vice President, declaring what Officer shall then act as President, and such Officer shall act accordingly, until the Disability be removed, or a President shall be elected.

The President shall, at stated Times, receive for his Services, a Compensation, which shall neither be increased nor diminished during the Period for which he shall have been elected, and he shall not receive within that Period any other Emolument from the United States, or any of them.

Before he enter on the Execution of his Office, he shall take the following Oath or Affirmation:—"I do solemnly swear (or affirm) that I will faithfully execute the Office of President of the United States, and will to the best of my Ability, preserve, protect and defend the Constitution of the United States."

Section. 2.

The President shall be Commander in Chief of the Army and Navy of the United States, and of the Militia of the several States, when called into the actual Service of the United States; he may require the Opinion, in writing, of the principal Officer in each of the executive Departments, upon any Subject relating to the

Duties of their respective Offices, and he shall have Power to grant Reprieves and Pardons for Offences against the United States, except in Cases of Impeachment.

He shall have Power, by and with the Advice and Consent of the Senate, to make Treaties, provided two thirds of the Senators present concur; and he shall nominate, and by and with the Advice and Consent of the Senate, shall appoint Ambassadors, other public Ministers and Consuls, Judges of the supreme Court, and all other Officers of the United States, whose Appointments are not herein otherwise provided for, and which shall be established by Law: but the Congress may by Law vest the Appointment of such inferior Officers, as they think proper, in the President alone, in the Courts of Law, or in the Heads of Departments.

The President shall have Power to fill up all Vacancies that may happen during the Recess of the Senate, by granting Commissions which shall expire at the End of their next Session.

Section. 3.

He shall from time to time give to the Congress Information of the State of the Union, and recommend to their Consideration such Measures as he shall judge necessary and expedient; he may, on extraordinary Occasions, convene both Houses, or either of them, and in Case of Disagreement between them, with Respect to the Time of Adjournment, he may adjourn them to such Time as he shall think proper; he shall receive Ambassadors and other public Ministers; he shall take Care that the Laws be faithfully executed, and shall Commission all the Officers of the United States.

Section. 4.

The President, Vice President and all civil Officers of the United States, shall be removed from Office on Impeachment for, and Conviction of, Treason, Bribery, or other high Crimes and Misdemeanors.

Article III.

Section. 1.

The judicial Power of the United States, shall be vested in one supreme Court, and in such inferior Courts as the Congress may from time to time ordain and establish. The Judges, both of the supreme and inferior Courts, shall hold their Offices during good Behaviour, and shall, at stated Times, receive for their Services, a Compensation, which shall not be diminished during their Continuance in Office.

Section. 2.

The judicial Power shall extend to all Cases, in Law and Equity, arising under this Constitution, the Laws of the United States, and Treaties made, or which shall be made, under their Authority;—to all Cases affecting Ambassadors, other public Ministers and Consuls;—to all Cases of admiralty and maritime Jurisdiction;—to Controversies to which the United States shall be a Party;—to Controversies between two or more States;— between a State and Citizens of another State,—between Citizens of different States,—between Citizens of the same State claiming Lands under Grants of different States, and between a State, or the Citizens thereof, and foreign States, Citizens or Subjects.

In all Cases affecting Ambassadors, other public Ministers and Consuls, and those in which a State shall be Party, the supreme Court shall have original Jurisdiction. In all the other Cases before mentioned, the

supreme Court shall have appellate Jurisdiction, both as to Law and Fact, with such Exceptions, and under such Regulations as the Congress shall make.

The Trial of all Crimes, except in Cases of Impeachment, shall be by Jury; and such Trial shall be held in the State where the said Crimes shall have been committed; but when not committed within any State, the Trial shall be at such Place or Places as the Congress may by Law have directed.

Section. 3.

Treason against the United States, shall consist only in levying War against them, or in adhering to their Enemies, giving them Aid and Comfort. No Person shall be convicted of Treason unless on the Testimony of two Witnesses to the same overt Act, or on Confession in open Court.

The Congress shall have Power to declare the Punishment of Treason, but no Attainder of Treason shall work Corruption of Blood, or Forfeiture except during the Life of the Person attained.

Article. IV.

Section. 1.

Full Faith and Credit shall be given in each State to the public Acts, Records, and judicial Proceedings of every other State. And the Congress may by general Laws prescribe the Manner in which such Acts, Records and Proceedings shall be proved, and the Effect thereof.

Section. 2.

The Citizens of each State shall be entitled to all Privileges and Immunities of Citizens in the several States.

A Person charged in any State with Treason, Felony, or other Crime, who shall flee from Justice, and be found in another State, shall on Demand of the executive Authority of the State from which he fled, be delivered up, to be removed to the State having Jurisdiction of the Crime.

No Person held to Service or Labour in one State, under the Laws thereof, escaping into another, shall, in Consequence of any Law or Regulation therein, be discharged from such Service or Labour, but shall be delivered up on Claim of the Party to whom such Service or Labour may be due.

Section. 3.

New States may be admitted by the Congress into this Union; but no new State shall be formed or erected within the Jurisdiction of any other State; nor any State be formed by the Junction of two or more States, or Parts of States, without the Consent of the Legislatures of the States concerned as well as of the Congress.

The Congress shall have Power to dispose of and make all needful Rules and Regulations respecting the Territory or other Property belonging to the United States; and nothing in this Constitution shall be so construed as to Prejudice any Claims of the United States, or of any particular State.

RESPONSES TO QUESTIONS SUBMITTED FOR THE RECORD

**Questions for the Record from Representative Ted Deutch
Oversight of the Trump Administration's Iran Policy
June 19, 2019**

Question:

During our June 19 hearing, I asked whether the Administration believes it has the authority to launch military action against Iran, specifically under the 2001 Authorization for Use of Military Force (AUMF). Mr. Hook replied, "this is something the Office of the Legal Counsel can get you an opinion on if you'd like to submit it." Does the Administration believe the 2001 AUMF authorizes use of force against Iran, yes or no?

Answer:

Mr. Brian Hook: The Administration has not, to date, interpreted the 2001 AUMF as authorizing military force against Iran, except as may be necessary to defend U.S. or partner forces engaged in counterterrorism operations. As Secretary Pompeo has noted, the Administration's goal is to find a diplomatic solution to deter Iran's activities, not to engage in a conflict with Iran.

Question:

If yes, what is the basis or legal standing for the 2001 AUMF to serve as a valid justification for such military action?

Answer:

Mr. Brian Hook: The Administration has not, to date, interpreted the 2001 AUMF as authorizing military force against Iran, except as may be necessary to defend U.S. or partner forces engaged in counterterrorism operations.

Question:

Does the Administration believe that Iran is an "associated force" of al-Qaeda?

Answer:

Mr. Brian Hook: The Administration has not, to date, interpreted the 2001 AUMF as authorizing military force against Iran, except as may be necessary to defend U.S. or partner forces engaged in counterterrorism operations. Every determination as to whether a group or entity is covered by the 2001 AUMF is a fact-specific determination made at the most senior levels of the U.S. Government only after a careful evaluation of the intelligence concerning each group's organization, links with al-Qa'ida or the Taliban, and its participation in al-Qa'ida or the Taliban's ongoing hostilities against the United States or its coalition partners. The 2001 AUMF does not authorize the President to use force against every group that commits terrorist acts. The mere fact that an entity has been labeled a terrorist group, or that it has committed terrorist acts,

does not bring it within the scope of the 2001 AUMF. To date, the Executive Branch has determined that the following groups are covered by the 2001 AUMF: al-Qa'ida; the Taliban; certain other terrorist or insurgent groups affiliated with al-Qa'ida and the Taliban in Afghanistan; al-Qa'ida in the Arabian Peninsula; al-Shabaab; al-Qa'ida in the Lands of the Islamic Maghreb; al-Qa'ida in Syria; and ISIS.

Question:

Does the Administration consider the 2002 AUMF, which authorized U.S. military action in Iraq, to be a valid basis for U.S. military action against Iran in Iraq or elsewhere?

Answer:

Mr. Brian Hook: The Administration has not, to date, interpreted the 2002 AUMF as authorizing military force against Iran, except as may be necessary to defend U.S. or partner forces engaged in operations to establish a stable, democratic Iraq. As Secretary Pompeo has noted, the Administration's goal is to find a diplomatic solution to deter Iran's activities, not to engage in a conflict with Iran.

Question:

If yes, what is the basis or legal standing for the 2002 AUMF to serve as a valid justification for such military actions?

Answer:

Mr. Brian Hook: The Administration has not, to date, interpreted the 2002 AUMF as authorizing military force against Iran, except as may be necessary to defend U.S. or partner forces engaged in operations to establish a stable, democratic Iraq.

Question:

Does the Administration believe it currently has the authorities to conduct military operations against Iran? Yes or no?

Answer:

Mr. Brian Hook: I am not going to comment on hypotheticals. An analysis as to whether authority exists to use force in a given situation is fact-specific. But, as Secretary Pompeo has noted, the Administration's goal is to find a diplomatic solution to deter Iran's activities, not to engage in a conflict with Iran.

Question:

Will the Administration commit to seeking explicit authorization from Congress before using military force against Iran?

Answer:

Mr. Brian Hook: This Administration has communicated regularly with congressional leadership and other Members of Congress with regard to military operations, and will continue to do so. The Administration will also seek prior authorization from Congress for uses of military force when legally required.

Question:

On April 8, the Administration designated Iran's Revolutionary Guards Corps (IRGC) as a Foreign Terrorist Organization (FTO). The IRGC has thousands of members and connections to a variety of sectors of the Iranian economy. If fully implemented, the FTO designation would require extensive monitoring and the imposition of sanctions on numerous individuals and entities. Does the U.S. government have sufficient intelligence and personnel to fully implement this monitoring and sanctions regime?

Answer:

Mr. Brian Hook: The Department of State continues to work with our interagency partners to fully implement the consequences of the IRGC's designation as a FTO. The designation underscores the Iranian regime's use of terrorism as a central tool in its foreign policy and is intended to further isolate the regime of resources for its terrorist pursuits. On top of financial sanctions, it is now a federal crime for any person to knowingly provide material support or resources to the IRGC. We defer to the Departments of Justice and the Treasury on resource requirements to pursue criminal investigations and prosecutions or to enforce financial sanctions, respectively.

The FTO designation also imposes immigration consequences for certain individuals seeking to enter the United States. Anyone who is a member of, provides material support to, solicits funds for, or recruits members for the IRGC is now ineligible for a U.S. visa (except those who fall under two group exemptions granted by the Secretary of State to mitigate adverse impacts to legitimate travel to the United States). The resources required for the Department of State to process nominations to the U.S. government's terrorist watchlist stemming from this FTO designation will be dependent on the activities of our missions overseas and certain domestic offices, primarily through open source and consular record research.

Question:

Does the Administration view the IRGC FTO designation as a possible legal basis for U.S. military strikes against the IRGC? In your opinion, does it allow the Administration to cite the 2001 AUMF to take military action against the IRGC?

Answer:

Mr. Brian Hook: The 2001 AUMF does not authorize the President to use force against every group that commits terrorist acts. The mere fact that an entity has been labeled a terrorist group, or that it has committed terrorist acts, does not bring it within the scope of the 2001 AUMF. The Administration's designation of the IRGC as a foreign terrorist organization (FTO) for purposes of Section 219 of the Immigration and Nationality Act does not mean that it is covered by the 2001 AUMF.

The Administration has not, to date, interpreted the 2001 AUMF as authorizing military force against Iran, except as may be necessary to defend U.S. or partner forces engaged in counterterrorism operations. Every determination as to whether a group or entity is covered by the 2001 AUMF is a fact-specific determination made at the most senior levels of the U.S. Government only after a careful evaluation of the intelligence concerning each group's organization, links with al-Qa'ida or the Taliban, and its participation in al-Qa'ida or the Taliban's ongoing hostilities against the United States or its coalition partners. To date, the Executive Branch has determined that the following groups are covered by the 2001 AUMF: al-Qa'ida; the Taliban; certain other terrorist or insurgent groups affiliated with al-Qa'ida and the Taliban in Afghanistan; al-Qa'ida in the Arabian Peninsula; al-Shabaab; al-Qa'ida in the Lands of the Islamic Maghreb; al-Qa'ida in Syria; and ISIS.

Question:

On May 14, the State Department ordered non-emergency U.S. personnel to leave U.S. diplomatic facilities in Iraq in response to increased threats. Are there plans to strengthen the security of the U.S. embassy in Iraq to enable the return of U.S. personnel and the resumption of their important work?

Answer:

Mr. Brian Hook: In May, Marines from U.S. Central Command's (CENTCOM) Special Purpose Marine Air Ground Task Force arrived at U.S. Embassy Baghdad and were integrated into the Embassy's security program, augmenting the U.S. embassy in Iraq's already robust security capability. The Marines will redeploy from the Embassy when the Department of State and Department of Defense agree that the security environment no longer requires their presence. Iraqi Security Forces have also added additional personnel to checkpoints surrounding the Embassy.

Question:

How does the Administration plan to counter Iran's malign influence in the absence of staff responsible for the political and aid programs that promote U.S. interests in Iraq?

Answer:

Mr. Brian Hook: The President and the Secretary have been clear that the Administration's highest priority is the safety and security of all Americans in Iraq. Based on the existing threat environment, we decided to suspend operations in Basrah last autumn and order the temporary departure of some diplomatic staff from Baghdad and Erbil in May. Nevertheless, the United States remains deeply engaged throughout Iraq. Ambassador Tueller leads a team of our best and most effective diplomatic professionals at our Embassy in Baghdad. We remain committed to our important bilateral relationship with Iraq and continue daily diplomatic engagement to counter Iran's malign influence and highlight Iran's corrosive agenda in Iraq through public and private interactions, as well as to advance our other interests in Iraq and the region.

Question:

The personnel withdrawal decision was taken in parallel to the deployment of additional troops to the Gulf. Is this an indication that the Administration favors military over diplomatic initiatives in dealing with Iran?

Answer:

Mr. Brian Hook: The Administration has been clear that we do not seek conflict with Iran. We have been equally clear that we will defend our citizens, personnel, and interests against attacks by Iran or its proxies. The objective of recent deployments to the CENTCOM area of responsibility is to improve our force protection and safeguard U.S. personnel, as well as to provide additional deterrence and reduce the possibility of future hostilities. The Administration's maximum pressure campaign is designed to deprive the Iranian regime of the revenue it needs to fuel its destabilizing activities and to drive it to the negotiating table. Ultimately, the United States seeks a deal with Iran that comprehensively addresses the regime's destabilizing behavior – not just its nuclear program, but also its missile program, support to terrorism, and malign regional behavior. Iran has a very clear diplomatic off-ramp: it is to negotiate. Iran should meet our diplomacy with diplomacy, not with violence, terror, and extortion.

Question:

On June 11, Iran released Nizar Zakka, a Lebanese citizen and U.S. legal permanent resident. Was the Administration involved in negotiations that led to Mr. Zakka's release? Does the Administration believe his release signals a willingness by the Iranian government to negotiate the release of U.S. citizens detained in Iran? What specifically is the Administration doing to secure the release of Americans detained in Iran?

Answer:**Mr. Brian Hook:**

- The United States welcomed the release of Lebanese citizen Nizar Zakka, who Iran unjustly detained in Tehran's notorious Evin Prison for almost four years.

- The Lebanese government's persistent involvement and advocacy on behalf of Mr. Zakka was critical in his safe return.
- We hope that Mr. Zakka's release is a positive sign for U.S. citizens detained in Iran.
- We do not comment on the specifics of our diplomatic strategy to seek the release of U.S. citizens in Iran for security reasons. We are pursuing several lines of effort consistent with our no concessions policy.
- The U.S. continues to call on Iran to release missing and unjustly detained U.S. citizens including Bob Levinson, Siamak Namazi, Xiyue Wang, among others.

**Questions for the Record from Representative Colin Allred
Oversight of the Trump Administration's Iran Policy
June 19, 2019**

Question:

As you know, the Administration recently declared an emergency with Iran in order to justify bypassing Congress and selling billions of weapons to Saudi Arabia and the UAE. Were you a part of the discussions that led to that decision?

Answer:

Mr. Brian Hook: Yes

Question:

When were you first involved in those discussions?

Answer:

Mr. Brian Hook: This Administration has consistently made empowering our allies and partners a priority, as evidenced by President Trump's first foreign remarks in Saudi Arabia in May 2017. Iranian malign activity poses a fundamental threat to the stability of the Middle East and to American security at home and abroad. I have been continually involved in the State Department's efforts to equip our partners with the capabilities to defend themselves and to further the national security interest of the United States.

Question:

Were you aware of the threat streams that the Trump Administration used to justify the emergency declaration before the May 21st briefing to Congress?

Answer:

Mr. Brian Hook: Yes

Question:

You recently stated on PBS Newshour that "we have a goal of getting to a new and better deal to succeed the existing Iran nuclear deal". Have you seen any evidence that this high-pressure campaign is working?

Answer:

Mr. Brian Hook: We have denied the regime direct access to well over \$25 billion in oil revenue since May 2018. Going forward, our historic oil and petrochemical sanctions will

deprive Iran of as much as \$50 billion in revenue annually. Starving the regime of this funding means it has less money to spend on terror, missiles, and proxies like Hizballah. In March, Hizballah's leader, Hassan Nasrallah, publicly appealed for donations for the first time ever. In the last several months, he has been forced to undertake unprecedented austerity measures because money from Iran is not flowing in as it once did. Iranian proxies in Syria and elsewhere are going unpaid, and the services they once relied upon are drying up. Iran-backed militias can no longer rely on steady and consistent Iranian support. Hamas has also enacted what it calls an "austerity plan" to deal with a lack of funds from Iran.

Question:

What metrics are you using to measure the success of this high-pressure campaign?

Answer:

Mr. Brian Hook: We use a variety of metrics; including the revenue denied to the Iranian regime, Iranian oil exports, and Iranian funding of its proxies; to determine the effectiveness of our campaign.

Question:

Have any Iranian government officials reached out to begin a renegotiation of the deal?

Answer:

Mr. Brian Hook: No, there are no secret negotiations with the Iranian government.

Question:

What next steps does this Administration plan to take in regard to Iran?

Answer:

Mr. Brian Hook: We will continue to put pressure on the Iranian regime in order to obtain a comprehensive deal with Iran that addresses the regime's destabilizing behavior – not just their nuclear program, but also their missile program, support to terrorism, and malign regional behavior.

Question:

During the hearing you discussed the importance of separating the Iranian regime from the Iranian people. Do we know how the high pressure campaign the Administration is waging is impacting the lives of every day Iranians?

Answer:

Mr. Brian Hook: We have statistics on the Iranian economy that show declining growth. The United States does not sanction humanitarian goods or the sale of food, agricultural commodities, medicine, or medical devices. It has never been, nor is it now, our policy to target humanitarian trade with Iran. The regime's attempts to mischaracterize our very clear humanitarian exemptions are a hollow effort to distract from its corruption and mismanagement. The Iranian people know that the regime has a 40-year track record of stealing from the people to fund its foreign terror operations.

Question:

Will the U.S. re-examine its immigration visa policy towards Iranians in light of the negative impact of the Administration's high pressure campaign?

Answer:

Mr. Brian Hook: I would refer you to Consular Affairs and the Department of Homeland Security for questions regarding immigration policy.

**Questions for the Record from Representative Brad Sherman
Oversight of the Trump Administration's Iran Policy
June 19, 2019**

Question:

In the San Fernando Valley, and throughout Los Angeles, 670AM KIRN, Radio Iran provides radio broadcasting in Farsi. 670AM KIRN is the only Persian language radio station with FCC license on U.S. airwaves broadcasting and online 24 hours/ day.

What is the Administration doing to advance U.S. broadcasting in Farsi in Iran? Why has the Administration not focused on rebroadcasting local, readily available radio programming in Farsi, such as 670AM KIRN, as rebroadcasting would dramatically reduce costs?

Answer:

Mr. Brian Hook: The U.S. Agency for Global Media (USAGM), formerly the Board of Broadcasting Governors (BBG), is the U.S. government agency responsible for broadcasting Farsi language television and radio. We encourage free speech and open access to communication for all audiences, including the Farsi speaking audience in Iran and elsewhere. We are always open to new ways to support freedom of access to information be it online through streaming, podcasts, radio, television, or other effective means.