

Trump “All but Decided to Withdraw” from Iran Deal as IAEA Refutes Netanyahu Speech

By [Zero Hedge](#)

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Soon after Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu gave a televised address in which he [unveiled a cache of 55,000 pages of documents and 183 CDs](#) that he claimed comprised Iran’s alleged “atomic archive” of documents on its nuclear program, supposedly proving the existence of an illegal and ongoing secret program to “test and build nuclear weapons” called Project Amad, the UN’s atomic agency weighed in to directly negate the claims.

But right on cue, [Reuters](#) now reports that

“Trump has all but decided to withdraw from the 2015 Iran nuclear accord by May 12 but exactly how he will do so remains unclear, two White House officials and a source familiar with the administration’s internal debate said on Wednesday.”

On Tuesday, the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) issued an assessment in response to Netanyahu’s speech firmly asserting that there are “no credible indications” supporting Netanyahu’s claims of a continued Iranian nuclear weapons program after 2009.

According to the [AP summary of the IAEA assessment](#):

The U.N. nuclear agency says it believes that Iran had a “coordinated” nuclear weapons program in place before 2003, but found “no credible indications” of such work after 2009...

The documents focused on Iranian activities before 2003 and did not provide any explicit evidence that Iran has violated its 2015 nuclear deal with the international community.

The IAEA statements followed on the heels of a number of international Iran analysts weighing in to say there [appeared “nothing new” in terms of “evidence”](#) which Netanyahu confidently presented as if it were an open-and-shut bombshell revelation of Iranian malfeasance.

Nothing really new in [@netanyahu](#) Iran speech. Confirms that Iran closed down nuclear weapons program in 2003. Continued technology efforts. In principle all of this well known. No allegation that Iran cheats on 2015 nuclear deal. <https://t.co/IJEInZ3JmM>

— Carl Bildt (@carlbildt) [April 30, 2018](#)

One such specialist in an op-ed for the *New York Times* called the supposed Israeli Mossad intelligence haul a big [“nuclear nothingburger”](#) full of things already well-known to the world, with the further implication that the intelligence operation that netted the files itself appears hokey and untrustworthy.

Middle East analyst Steven Simon [noted in the *Times* piece that](#):

The archive had been stored in what Mr. Netanyahu described as a derelict warehouse in Tehran. The photos he displayed indicated that there did not even appear to be a lock on the door. One wonders how important the Iranians thought these documents were, given the slapdash approach they took to storing them. In any case, the Mossad operation that netted this haul apparently took place in January and President Trump was briefed on it shortly afterward.

Meanwhile, former Israeli National Security Advisor Uzi Arad in response to Netanyahu’s claim that Iran lied about its nuclear program, said that “at no point was there any indication that Iran violated the agreement.”

"At no point was there any indication that Iran violated the agreement", says former Israeli National Security Advisor Uzi Arad in response to [@netanyahu's](#) claim that [#Iran](#) lied about its nuclear program. [pic.twitter.com/e1ZqNAAuj2](#)

— i24NEWS English (@i24NEWS_EN) [May 1, 2018](#)

Indeed, after Netanyahu’s bizarre performance which in typical fashion made heavy use of stage props and simplistically styled visuals (who can forget the absurd [bugs bunny cartoon bomb image](#) he held up at the U.N. in 2012?), there’s been little reporting focused on just how a team of Mossad agents waltzed into Iran to steal from [“a dilapidated warehouse”](#) over 100,000 of the country’s *most sensitive and damning documents*.

To underscore this far-fetched scenario is literally the claim being made — that a large Mossad team walked into an Iranian warehouse to physically carry and secretly transport bulk print files and CDs out of the country — a senior Israeli intelligence official was widely [quoted as saying of the covert operation](#),

“We didn’t take everything because it was too heavy.”

To this we might reply it was so nice of the Iranians and their feared and paranoia-driven Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps to leave their most secretive and “hidden” files so unguarded and out in the open, and in an old unsecured building in which there “did not even appear to be a lock on the door” [according to the NY Times](#).

Below is the official account currently circulating of the details of the Mossad operation inside Iran, sourced to high level Israeli officials and [posted to Axios by Israeli national security reporter Barak Ravid](#):

- Israeli officials say the Mossad received intelligence that showed the Iranians were trying to hide all documents concerning the military dimensions of their

nuclear program.

- The official said that in a highly secret operation known to a handful of Iranian officials, the Iranians transferred tens of thousands of documents and CD's from several different sites around the country to a civilian warehouse in Tehran. The Israeli official said the Iranians did all that because they were afraid IAEA inspectors would find the documents.
- The Mossad put the warehouse under surveillance and started preparing for a possible operation to seize the documents. According to Israeli officials, more than 100 Mossad spies worked on this operation and, in January 2018, it was implemented.
- A senior Israeli intelligence official said the Mossad managed to put its hands on most of the documents in the warehouse. "We didn't take everything because it was too heavy", he said.

The trove of Persian language documents are still being reportedly translated and analyzed by separate teams of Mossad and CIA specialists.

Assuming any of the details of the claimed Mossad "secret files" heist are accurate, the likely correct version of events is that being offered by the IAEA, while the Iranians themselves [remained unmoved by the strange presentation, slamming](#) the Israeli PM's accusations, [calling him](#) "an infamous liar" who "can't stop crying wolf." As evidence for this assertion, the Iranians can simply point to Netanyahu's testimony before the U.S. House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform in 2002 on Iraq's mythical WMD program.

Netanyahu argued in the lead up to the disastrous Iraq war:

"There is no question whatsoever that Saddam is seeking and is working and is advancing toward the development of nuclear weapons, no question whatsoever."

And asserted that the United States must pursue regime change because, "make no mistake about it, if and once Saddam has nuclear weapons, the terror network will have nuclear weapons." He said there was "no question (Saddam) hadn't given up on his nuclear program" and that the Iraqi leader was "hell-bent on achieving an atomic bomb, atomic capabilities."

Of course, all of this was dead wrong.

And then there's this stellar track record:

This is paranoid [#Netanyahu](#) before the Iraq invasion. Listen to him lying through his teeth about Saddam seeking the development of [#NuclearWeapons](#) & 15 yrs later look at the chaos in Iraq.

Does he REALLY think the world will believe him again about [#Iran](#) ?
pic.twitter.com/w90ZDDWqIW

— Marwa Osman (@Osman_Marwa1) [May 1, 2018](#)

Though it's possible that Trump might not actually go through with unilaterally collapsing the deal altogether, the possibility of that Obama-era 2015 deal surviving through 2018 is hanging by a thread.

While [Reuters further reports](#) Trump's top aides are attempting to talk him down from nixing it all together, citing a White House source who said "it was possible Trump will end up with a decision that 'is not a full pullout' but was unable to describe what that might look like" — current momentum since Netanyahu's speech seems going in the direction of a pull-out.

If so, this will not bode well for the prospects of a greater Israeli-Iran-Syria-Hezbollah war that is sure to set the whole region on fire.

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