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When Peace Breaks Out With Iran ...

This has been the most dramatic week in US/Iranian relations since 1979.

Last weekend ten US Navy personnel were caught in Iranian waters, as the Pentagon kept changing its story on how they got there. It could have been a disaster for President Obama's big gamble on diplomacy over conflict with Iran. But after several rounds of telephone diplomacy between Secretary of State John Kerry and his Iranian counterpart Javad Zarif, the Iranian leadership — which we are told by the neocons is too irrational to even talk to — did a most rational thing: weighing the costs and benefits they decided it made more sense not to belabor the question of what an armed US Naval vessel was doing just miles from an Iranian military base. Instead of escalating, the Iranian government fed the sailors and sent them back to their base in Bahrain.



Then on Saturday, the Iranians released four Iranian-Americans from prison, including Washington Post reporter Jason Rezaian. On the US side, seven Iranians held in US prisons, including six who were dual citizens, were granted clemency. The seven were in prison for seeking to trade with Iran in violation of the decades-old US economic sanctions.

This mutual release came just hours before the United Nations certified that Iran had met its obligations under the nuclear treaty signed last summer and that, accordingly, US and international sanctions would be lifted against the country.

How did the "irrational" Iranians celebrate being allowed back into the international community? They immediately announced a massive purchase of more than 100 passenger planes from the European Airbus company, and that they would also purchase spare parts from Seattle-based Boeing. Additionally, US oil executives have been in Tehran negotiating trade deals to be finalized as soon as it is legal to do so. The jobs created by this peaceful trade will be beneficial to all parties concerned. The only jobs that should be lost are the Washington advocates of re-introducing sanctions on Iran.

Events this week have dealt a harsh blow to Washington's neocons, who for decades have been warning against any engagement with Iran. These true isolationists were determined that only regime change and a puppet government in Tehran could produce peaceful relations between the US and Iran. Instead, engagement has worked to the benefit of the US and Iran.

Proven wrong, however, we should not expect the neocons to apologize or even pause to reflect on their failed ideology. Instead, they will continue to call for new sanctions on any pretext. They even found a



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way to complain about the release of the US sailors — they should have never been confronted in the first place even if they were in Iranian waters. And they even found a way to complain about the return of the four Iranian-Americans to their families and loved ones — the US should have never negotiated with the Iranians to coordinate the release of prisoners, they grumbled. It was a show of weakness to negotiate! Tell that to the families on both sides who can now enjoy the company of their loved ones once again!

I have often said that the neocons' greatest fear is for peace to break out. Their well-paid jobs are dependent on conflict, sanctions, and pre-emptive war. They grow wealthy on conflict, which only drains our economy. Let's hope that this new opening with Iran will allow many other productive Americans to grow wealthy through trade and business ties. Let's hope many new productive jobs will be created on both sides. Peace is prosperous!

Ron Paul is a former U.S. congressman from Texas. This article originally appeared at the [Ron Paul Institute for Peace and Prosperity](#) and is reprinted here with permission.



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