



Written by [Alex Newman](#) on August 3, 2016

Outrage After Obama Accused of Paying Ransom to Iranian Mullahs

Outrage is growing nationwide, and especially in Congress, after the Obama administration was exposed paying what is alleged to be an illegal \$400 million cash ransom to the totalitarian Islamist rulers of Iran in exchange for four captured Americans. Republican lawmakers blasted the White House, saying the supposed appeasement of the Iranian mullahs would put Americans at greater risk of kidnapping around the world, as hostile regimes and terror groups seek to extort U.S. taxpayers. Iranian officials quoted in media reports also described the secret payment as a “ransom.” The Obama administration fired back, though, saying the huge cash shipment to Iranian authorities right around the time the prisoners were released was not in any way related to the handing over of four detained Americans.



The latest phase of the saga broke Wednesday morning as the *Wall Street Journal* published a [report](#), citing multiple sources, essentially alleging that the huge cash transfer was in fact a ransom. According to the *Journal*, the Obama administration secretly organized an airlift of close to half of a billion dollars, sent over in the form of Swiss francs, euros, and other currencies on wooden pallets. The giant payment, reportedly the first installment of a \$1.7 billion settlement Obama reached with Tehran, coincided with the January release of four Americans held by the Big Government-loving Islamic dictatorship. It also coincided with the start of the implementation of the [deeply controversial nuclear pseudo-treaty reached between Obama and the mullahs in 2015](#).

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Republicans suggested that the timing of Obama’s payments to the Iranian regime were no coincidence. U.S. Senator Tom Cotton of Arkansas, for example, accused the White House of handing over “a \$1.7 billion ransom to the ayatollahs for U.S. hostages.” The Republican lawmaker, one of the leading critics of Obama’s unconstitutional nuclear deal with Tehran, also linked the alleged ransom to recent arrests of Americans and other Westerners in Iran. “This break with longstanding U.S. policy put a price on the head of Americans, and has led Iran to continue its illegal seizures” of Americans in Iran, he was quoted as saying by the *Journal*. At least two more U.S. citizens have been detained since the cash shipment, along with others from France, Canada, the United Kingdom, and other Western countries.

Another U.S. senator, Big Government Republican Mark Kirk of Illinois, also said Obama’s alleged ransom paid to Iran’s regime was a threat to Americans everywhere. “Paying ransom to kidnappers puts Americans even more at risk,” he said in a statement. “While Americans were relieved by Iran’s overdue



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release of illegally imprisoned American hostages, the White House's policy of appeasement has led Iran to illegally seize more American hostages." Senator James Lankford, Republican from Oklahoma, noted that Obama's payment would "fund Iran's military expansion" and was an "appalling example" of executive-branch governance. "Subsidizing Iran's military is perhaps the worst use of taxpayer dollars ever by an American president," added Lankford, who is pushing legislation to stop Obama from sending more tax money to Tehran.

GOP presidential contender Donald Trump, meanwhile, called the news a "scandal" and linked the controversial payment to his Democrat rival, Hillary Clinton, who as Obama's secretary of state at the time was involved in launching negotiations with the Iranian dictatorship. "Our incompetent Secretary of State, Hillary Clinton, was the one who started talks to give 400 million dollars, in cash, to Iran," Trump said in a Twitter post. "Scandal!"

Republican National Committee boss Reince Priebus had harsh words, too. "The Obama-Clinton foreign policy not only means cutting a dangerous nuclear deal with the world's number one state sponsor of terrorism, it also means paying them a secret ransom with cargo planes full of cash," he said. House Speaker Paul Ryan, a leading enabler of Obama's lawlessness, said that if the report was true, it "confirms our longstanding suspicion that the administration paid a ransom in exchange for Americans unjustly detained in Iran."

The White House, on the other hand, denied that the payment was a ransom for the prisoners, who were released in exchange for a number of Iranians imprisoned in American prisons. "The link between prisoner release and payment to Iran are completely false," U.S. State Department spokesman John Kirby argued in a Twitter post responding to the *Wall Street Journal's* article. "As we've made clear, the negotiations over the settlement of an outstanding claim ... were completely separate from the discussions about returning our American citizens home. Not only were the two negotiations separate, they were conducted by different teams on each side, including, in the case of The Hague claims, by technical experts involved in these negotiations for many years."

In between denying that the payment was a ransom, White House spokesman Josh Earnest also lashed out at Republicans over the accusations. "The United States, under President Obama, has not paid a ransom to secure the release of Americans unjustly detained in Iran and we're not going to pay a ransom," Earnest declared at Wednesday's daily White House briefing, arguing that the accusations were part of an elaborate GOP campaign to undermine Obama's nuclear pseudo-treaty with Tehran. "They're struggling to justify their opposition to our engagement with Iran. I understand the interest in details for a more colorful story but I don't understand what this does to the broader outlines of an agreement that has been in place for six months now."

The \$1.7 billion payment Obama promised to Tehran, money owed to Iran since the 1979 globalist- and communist-backed "revolution," traces back to \$400 million that the Shah of Iran at the time deposited with the Pentagon to buy weapons. He was ousted and the money was frozen. The remaining \$1.3 billion is accrued interest. The Iranian dictatorship had been litigating the issue at an international "court" in The Hague, demanding billions, before the settlement with Obama was reached. The administration said the secret January cash lift to Tehran was the first installment of that settlement, but due to federal law, it had to be paid in cash in foreign currency. Administration officials defended the move, claiming to have been "saving taxpayers billions of dollars that they would have had to pay had we not reached this compromise."

Among the detained U.S. citizens released by Tehran in January were *Washington Post* bureau chief



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Jason Rezaian, who was charged with espionage, and Christian pastor Saeed Abedini, who was held for years by the dictatorship for sharing the Gospel. The other two Americans were Amir Hekmati, a former U.S. Marine; and Nosratollah Khosravi-Roodsari, who was relatively unknown before being released in January. The four Americans were exchanged for seven Iranians imprisoned in the United States for sanctions violations. Another 14 Iranians had charges against them dropped as part of the deal. Reports suggest Iran is working to capture other Americans in an effort to obtain more leverage and do more deals with Obama before he leaves office.

The irony of all of this, of course, is that establishment globalists in Washington, D.C., created many of these problems to begin with through previous rounds of unconstitutional foreign intervention. Consider that until 1979, Iran was ruled by the pro-Western, pro-America, anti-communist Shah Mohammad Reza Pahlavi, who was modernizing the nation, favored peace with Israel, protected religious freedom, and served as a powerful bulwark to the mass-murdering Soviet regime's ambitions. Along with other Council on Foreign Relations types, though, globalist architect Henry "New World Order" Kissinger, who served in numerous senior executive branch positions, [betrayed the shah, eventually resulting in the leader being deposed in a Soviet-backed campaign of terror and revolution](#). The collapse of his government led to the orchestrated rise of globalist- and communist-backed terrorist Ayatollah Khomeini, whose totalitarian successors continue to oppress Iran today.

More recently, Obama's unconstitutional nuclear deal with the Iranian dictatorship is [another example of Washington, D.C., being out of control](#). The deal, which was backed by CFR globalists and other establishment types, had several major conflicts with the U.S. Constitution, a point highlighted by multiple members of Congress. For one, the scheme was a treaty, and all treaties must be ratified by the U.S. Senate. Obama simply refused to acknowledge that the treaty was a treaty, calling it an "executive agreement," and so, Senate ratification was illegally bypassed. The second major constitutional problem is the fact that Congress passed laws mandating sanctions against Iran's alleged military-nuclear program and congressional oversight of the negotiations — all of which Obama purported to overrule with his illegal pseudo-treaty. [Establishment Republicans helped Obama with the ruse](#). So, whether the January payment to the mullahs was a ransom, a bribe, or a legitimate settlement misses the point. It is time for all three branches of government to obey the Constitution and to stop meddling in the affairs of foreign nations.

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