

threat to American or even Israeli aircraft.

However, that is not where Iran's air defenses will be in 10 years. Under this agreement, the ban on conventional weapons sales to Iran will be lifted after 5 years. Russia has already agreed to sell Iran four batteries of S-300 vehicle-launched surface-to-air missiles. Depending upon the sophistication of these S-300 missile systems, they may be able to engage aircraft up to 200 miles away.

As we saw last month with Iran unveiling its new solid-fuel missiles, Iran's domestic military infrastructure will not remain static. Over the next decade, as Iran acquires more and more increasingly advanced weapons systems, its area denial capability will make airstrikes even more difficult. Will a future American President, therefore, have the same military options that we have today, as President Obama and Secretary Kerry claim? The answer is no.

We will still have military options available to us, but the calculus for carrying out a targeted airstrike will be much different down the road. Therefore, it is not realistic for President Obama to claim that future Presidents will have the same military options against Iran we have today. And the more the realistic possibility of a military strike decreases, the more likely Iran will be to violate the terms of the agreement and go after a bomb.

In 10 years' time, under this agreement, our best hope for Iran not attaining a nuclear weapon will be the Iranian Government voluntarily deciding it doesn't want one. That is not something I am willing to bank on.

Madam President, I also want to speak for a moment about Iran's support for terrorism and the idea put forward by President Obama that Iran will spend most of the soon-to-be-acquired economic wealth on its own economy. Even if we assume Iran's military spending remains what it is today as a percentage of Iran's budget, what would that mean going forward?

Well, there are many estimates on how much Iran spends on its military. Some experts put the figure at around \$10 billion per year, while others estimate the figure to be closer to \$15 billion or even higher. In addition, of the amount spent on Iran's military, about 65 percent is spent on Iran's Revolutionary Guard Corps—the IRGC.

In the first year of this agreement, between unfrozen assets and increased revenue from oil sales, Iran is expected to see an initial influx of around \$140 billion. Now, using conservative numbers, if Iran's military spending stayed the same in this coming year as a percentage of GDP, it would increase to almost \$15 billion, with \$9.5 billion going to the IRGC.

One of the main national security concerns we have regarding the IRGC is that Iran uses it to support terrorist organizations. Iran is the main supporter of Hezbollah in Lebanon and

Hamas in Gaza, both of which have provoked conflicts with Israel in recent years.

In addition, Iran's support of instability in the region is well known, with the Iranian Government providing funding to the Houthis in Yemen and military assistance to Assad in Syria. Many of our own casualties in Iraq were the result of Iranian-made bombs provided to insurgents by the Iranian Quds Force.

Last summer, the missiles being launched at Israel out of Gaza were primarily imported from Iran. It is no wonder Israel has been so opposed to this deal.

Even the Iron Dome system, which proved so successful during the last Israeli-Palestinian conflict, can be overwhelmed if enough missiles are fired at once. And now Iran, a country bent on Israel's destruction, is going to see a huge increase in military spending.

Even the Quds Force commander, Qassem Suleimani, the man responsible for supplying Iraqi insurgents with bombs that killed U.S. soldiers, will see United Nations and European Union sanctions lifted as a result of this deal.

President Obama keeps arguing that the danger of a nuclear-armed Iran far outweighs the short-term impact of Iran's increased support for terrorism. As we have discussed, I don't think this agreement prevents Iran from getting a nuclear bomb. But even if my colleagues disagree with me on that point, are we really willing to trade the lives of our allies in the short term to try to achieve this goal? That is not a risk I am willing to take.

In urging my colleagues to vote against this deal, I would also like to speak for just a moment about what would happen if Congress is able to stop this deal?

The President keeps saying a “no” vote on this deal will lead to war. Well, that is unrealistic and a clear attempt by the President to garner support for the agreement by stoking people's fears.

Iran is very aware of its own military limitations, and it knows what the outcome of such a war would be. For Iran, in the short term, a much more realistic response would be for it to try to keep its side of the agreement in an attempt to gain United Nations and EU sanctions relief. However, despite this attempt, the United States could double down on the U.N. sanctions that were in place prior to the December framework and threaten to use secondary sanctions against foreign businesses who wish to do business with Iran.

Given the size of the U.S. economy compared to Iran, this is a powerful deterrent. Since Iran's economy is already hurting, maintaining sanctions would provide more leverage for the P5+1 to get a better deal.

However, another plausible outcome following congressional rejection of the

deal would be for Iran to try to capitalize on congressional disapproval by seeking to divide Russia and China from the West to undermine the multilateral sanctions regime. Iran could try to achieve this by implementing certain commitments from the agreement but not others.

But even if China and Russia wish to do business with Iran, they both still have an incentive to try to achieve the original goal of the negotiations. It is not in China's interest for a nuclear-armed Iran to cause greater instability with global energy prices, and Russia doesn't want an Islamist regime in its backyard, which is prone to regional conflicts, acquiring nuclear weapons capabilities.

These scenarios I am describing have already been echoed by a chorus of experts who have pointed out the flaws in this agreement and offered alternatives. The vote this week is not—is not—a choice between supporting a bad deal or going to war. The vote this week is an opportunity to reject a bad deal in order to achieve a better outcome.

That is what we ought to be doing, and I hope we get the chance to get on this resolution and that we have the chance to get a full debate here in the Senate where the people's voices can be heard. I hope when it is all said and done, Members here in the Senate will come to the same conclusion I and many of my colleagues have, which is that this is a bad deal for our country, it is a bad deal for our allies in the region, and there is a much better outcome that can be achieved if the Senate will reject this bad deal and get us back to negotiations where we can achieve a better outcome.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. BLUNT. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

NOMINATION OF ROSEANN A. KETCHMARK TO BE UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE FOR THE WESTERN DISTRICT OF MISSOURI

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will proceed to executive session to consider the following nomination, which the clerk will report.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read the nomination of Roseann A. Ketchmark, of Missouri, to be United States District Judge for the Western District of Missouri.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, there will now be 30