

Considering that 200,000 American troops remain in harm's way in Iraq and Afghanistan, in wars costing more than \$1 trillion, President Obama had remarkably little to say about this massive American expenditure of blood and treasure. Perhaps that is because there is little good news on either front. In both cases, he simply expressed confidence that our troops are accomplishing their mission and will soon come home.

But contrary to the President's claim about Iraq – “Make no mistake, this war is ending” – the violence there actually spiked this month. That is partly because Iraq's dominant Shiite Arabs prohibited opposing Sunni Arab candidates from running in upcoming elections, leaving the Sunnis little option but violence, which threatens a revival of full-blown sectarian warfare. President Obama did not address the hard question: will he really withdraw U.S. troops from Iraq, even if that country goes back up in flames?

On Iran's nuclear program, the President's words were much stronger than his actual policy. He stated: “As Iran's leaders continue to ignore their obligations, there should be no doubt: They, too, will face growing consequences. That is a promise.” But in Geneva last year, the President actually offered Iran a deal that would permit its leaders to ignore their obligations – by continuing to enrich uranium in violation of UN Security Council resolutions. The only real “consequence” that could compel Iran's leaders to stop enriching uranium is the prospect of military air strikes on their nuclear facilities, as I advocated in a recent [New York Times oped](#), but the Obama administration has foolishly undercut its negotiating leverage by [taking that military option off the table](#).