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## **Johnson slams Obama on ISIS strategy; Sensenbrenner touts 'USA FREEDOM Act'**

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OCONOMOWOC -- U.S. Sen. Ron Johnson said his preferred method for dealing with ISIS is to "wipe them off the face of the Earth" as he blasted President Obama for being too soft on the issue.

"For me, defeat is, you know, defeat. Get rid of them, kill them!" Johnson said. "Wipe them off the face of the Earth. Wipe that evil, that barbarity off the face of the Earth. President Obama's definition of defeat is 'Let's kind of just contain this thing, kick it down the road and let the next guy or gal take care of it.'"

Johnson spoke on national policy at the Wisconsin Conservative Action Conference in Oconomowoc on Saturday.

He called the recently negotiated Iranian deal "awful," saying, "that negotiation was lost before it before it ever started." Johnson argued that Obama is lifting economic sanctions against Iran "while basically acknowledging their right to enrich uranium."

Johnson said he doesn't believe any nuclear enrichment program in Iran could be peaceful. "If they want peaceful nuclear power, they can buy the fuel like other places. That's an outright lie," he said.

The freshman senator from Oshkosh said he will introduce an amendment on Tuesday to rename the Iran deal a "treaty," which would require 67 votes -- a two-thirds majority -- for Senate ratification. He added, "When I lose that, I'll say let's deem it a congressional executive agreement with filibuster privileges -- 60 votes. When I lose that, I'll say how about a congressional executive agreement, expedited procedures -- 50 votes."

Johnson also blasted Obama for pulling U.S. troops from Iraq, saying "the war had been won" but that the U.S. should have stayed to build a stable democracy. Obama, Johnson said, "bugged out," causing U.S. casualties and money spent to be "wasted."

"As we see things moving forward with ISIS, he basically allows Iran to be the boots on the ground, spreading their influence," said Johnson, "because (Obama's) not committed to the very goal he set for himself to degrade and defeat ISIS."

Johnson told WisPolitics.com afterward that he supports more U.S. troops in Afghanistan but that he would not vote to authorize troops to fight ISIS in Syria and elsewhere because he doubts Obama's commitment to success.

"I certainly don't see that in the authorization to use military force that he presented to us." he said. "It's going to be so difficult right now with this president in office. We're going to have to try in some way, shape or form, to get by the next couple of years."

Johnson also blasted Obama's meeting this weekend with Cuban President Raul Castro, the first high-level meeting between leaders of the U.S and Cuba in a half-century.

"I obviously disagree with the direction President Obama's taking on policy as it relates to Cuba," Johnson said. "Our policy should be focused on two primary goals: to improve the lives of a lot of people in Cuba but also to protect our own national security. Cuba is already open for trade throughout pretty much the rest of the world, and it certainly hasn't done anything in terms of bringing the regime in Cuba in the modern world to allow freedom of expression, lack of oppression."

"It's just like we're doing with Iran," Johnson added. "If we lessen those sanctions we'll just put more money, more economic strength into some regimes that actually harm our national security. It's not a good thing that President Obama is even attending the conference where you've got Raul Castro there. You're raising his profile, you're legitimatizing that regime, which is a completely illegitimate regime."

### **Sensenbrenner to revive 'FREEDOM Act'; Ryan calls for new tax code**

Also at the daylong conservative conference, U.S. Rep. Jim Sensenbrenner of Menomonee Falls said he plans to revive his "USA FREEDOM Act" bill that would restrict the National Security Agency's ability to collect data and monitor Americans' phone calls and electronic communication, including social media posts.

Sensenbrenner faulted previous administrations, both Democratic and Republican, for "going too far" in response to the Sept. 11, 2001 terror attacks. "They say that by getting all of it, there might be something relevant that is found. What we should be doing is targeting those people for whom there is a reasonable suspicion that they are involved in terrorist activities, and then going after their phone records and the people they are talking to," he said.

Sensenbrenner said "You're going to hear an awful lot of curious arguments on why we should even consider this law because of the terrorist attacks in Paris and in other places in the world. I will respond to that argument this way: By the admission of the NSA, of the trillions of phone records they have gotten, there has been only one potential terrorist attack against the United States that has been uncovered. While I know that trying to find out what terrorists are doing is somewhat like trying to find a needle in a haystack, the NSA has made the haystack so big, they can't see the forest for the trees."

He said he "hopes there won't be a partisan squabble" that would prevent support from both sides of the aisle for the legislation.

U.S. Rep. Paul Ryan spoke briefly as well. He repeated his belief that the United States' current tax code is "so thick and so complicated that it gives the Internal Revenue Service way too much

subjective power." He said he hopes to "make sure that an IRS agent can never again target someone based on their political beliefs."

Ryan also said "it's an economic imperative that we lower tax rates" for businesses. He said American business tax rate is 35 percent -- "the highest in the world," compared with 15 percent in Canada, 12.5 percent in Ireland, 20 percent in Britain and 25 percent in China.

"We are in a global economy whether you like it or not," he said. "When you tax your businesses at much higher tax rates than our foreign competitors tax theirs, guess what? They win, we lose."

-- *By Kay Nolan*  
*For WisPolitics.com*

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