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September 15, 2017: The Iran Deal Stays and Median Income Is Up

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Title: The Iran Deal Stays and Median Income Is Up

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9/15/2017—Well, some good news for a change. President Trump did not abrogate the Iran deal yesterday, reports the New York Times—who even knew there was such a deadline? According to the story, the October deadline to find compliance is window dressing. Finding non-compliance does not affect the deal. But reintroducing sanctions yesterday would have abrogated the agreement. So, it may be that Trump makes anti-Iranian noise in October while carefully keeping the Iranian agreement. On the income side, household median income rose 3.2% to its highest level ever in real terms—finally surpassing 1999. And in the last two years, the growth has been over 8% in real terms. Nor has all this been just growth at the top. A column by David Brooks today states that income share of the poor is up 3%. Capitalism is working he says, and what is needed are policies that stimulate productivity growth. Brooks notes that this moderate growth should in part be attributed to the policies of President Obama. Actually, both pieces of this good news are attributable in part to President Obama, who pushed ahead courageously on Iran in the face of enormous opposition from the Republican majority in Congress and from within his own Party. Plus, he faced down Netanyahu, who badly misunderstood the best interests of Israel. So, President Obama: a really good President who looks even better today. Yet, let's end by giving Trump his due. He could always have governed from the center if he wanted to. A deal on DACA was suggested among Trump, Schumer and Pelosi. Good for them. Trump continued his racist hinting—both sides at fault in Charlottesville—even while dealing on immigration. Again, red meat for the base and maybe real policy for the country. Okay with me. Thanks to the Democratic leadership for not treating Trump like the Republican leadership treated Obama. To my conservative friends, look at the difference. Democrats really do deal when there can be agreement for the good of the country. Politics might dictate simple opposition, but the obligation of real politicians is the public good.