

Trump torpedoed Iran nuclear accord

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US President Donald Trump announced yesterday that America has withdrawn from the Iran nuclear accord, is reimposing crippling economic sanctions on Iran, and will soon add further unspecified sanctions.

In doing so, Trump ignored warnings from Washington's closest European allies and cosignatories of the nuclear accord—Britain, France and Germany—that such action risks plunging the Middle East into all-out war.

Whilst provocative and incendiary, yesterday's announcement is not in the least surprising.

As the *World Socialist Web Site* warned in a perspective published in April 2015 in response to the announcement that Iran and the great powers had reached the “framework” for a nuclear accord: “In a broader historical sense, the deal is not worth the paper it is written on. If and when it is expedient, the US will shred the agreement, as has happened many times in the past. The Libyan regime of Muammar Gaddafi cut a deal in 2003 to give up its WMD [Weapons of Mass Destruction] programs only to find itself the target of a NATO-led war for regime-change in 2011. Amid its own economic decline, US imperialism will stop at nothing in its reckless drive for global domination at the expense of its major rivals.”

Changing what needs to be changed, there are striking and instructive parallels between imperialist diplomacy in the 1930s and today. In the run-up to World War II, all sorts of diplomatic agreements were signed, only to be shredded soon after, with the Nazi regime leading the wolf pack.

In this, Trump is only more brazen and thuggish than his White House predecessors.

His speech was a rant. The wars the US has waged, fomented, and aided and abetted in the greater Middle East over the course of the past quarter-century have blown up complex societies, from Afghanistan and Iraq to Libya, Syria and Yemen. Yet the billionaire, fascist-minded demagogue accused Iran of being “the world's leading state sponsor of terror,” whose “malign” and

“sinister” activities have caused “havoc” in the Middle East.

The International Atomic Energy Agency, which has subjected Iran's nuclear program to the most intrusive inspection regime in history, all the other signatories of the Iran accord, US Defense Secretary James Mattis and other top members of the Trump administration all state categorically that Iran has fulfilled all its obligations under the Iran deal to the letter and has not had any nuclear-weapons program for at least a decade and a half. Yet Trump claimed Iran is on the cusp of threatening the US with nuclear-armed ballistic missiles.

As proof for these lies, he pointed to the April 30 show-and-tell presentation of Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, which was panned by the European Union and all but the most right-wing Western media outlets as hype and lies. The *New York Times*, which is an expert at war propaganda, deception and forgery, felt professionally affronted that Washington was associating itself with so crude a performance, headlining its editorial response “Netanyahu's Flimflam on Iran.”

Near the end of his speech Trump underscored—using language akin to that of a mafia don touting an “offer you can't refuse”—that Washington has embarked on an escalating campaign of economic, diplomatic and military pressure aimed at reimposing on the Iranian people the type of neocolonial subjugation that prevailed under the savage US-backed dictatorship of the Shah.

First he sang a paean to the Shah, claiming that prior to the 1979 Revolution Iran “commanded the respect of the world.” Then he declared that Iran's leaders will reject Washington's demands for a “new” US-dictated “deal,” adding, “I'd probably say the same thing if I was in their position. But the fact is, they are going to want to make a new and lasting deal.”

Trump made a brief reference to North Korea in his statement, immediately after boasting that by blowing up the Iran deal he had demonstrated “The United States no longer makes empty threats.”

Whatever the immediate outcome of the planned talks

between Trump and North Korean leader Kim Jung-un, the US repudiation of the Iran deal makes clear that the Korean Peninsula “peace talks” are a tactical maneuver aimed at facilitating US imperialist violence and banditry. Should a deal be reached, it will only be to free America’s hands for confrontations with its more substantial adversaries. If and when US strategic priorities change, or circumstances allow, Washington will invoke the most flimsy and contrived pretext to jettison a Korean denuclearization agreement.

The Democrats and wide sections of the US military-intelligence establishment have, it should be noted, decried Trump’s turn to negotiations with Pyongyang and more or less announced that they would repudiate any deal he signs with the North Korean regime.

No doubt the European imperialist powers are angered and shaken by Trump’s indifference to their counsels. French Prime Minister Emanuel Macron and German Chancellor Angela Merkel both came to Washington in late April to personally plea for Trump not to jettison the Iran deal. On Monday, it was British Foreign Secretary Boris Johnson’s turn, although he only had audiences with Vice-President Pence and Secretary of State Pompeo.

Once again US imperialism has brushed aside the concerns of its ostensible European allies in the naked pursuit of its own interests. Whatever is said in public statements, relations between the imperialist powers are ever more venomous as each pursues its own interests under conditions of economic crisis and ever-intensifying geopolitical and commercial rivalry.

The history of the last century demonstrated that the imperialist appetites of the British, French and German ruling elites are no less voracious than those of the capitalist rulers of America.

If they have sought to dissuade Trump from jettisoning the Iran deal it is only because this would cut across their attempts to exploit Iran economically, and because they fear the destabilizing impact of a war with Iran, including soaring oil prices and a further mass influx of refugees.

In their vain attempt to convince Trump to remain in the deal, the Europeans joined with him in making a whole series of fresh demands on Teheran, including for drastic limits to its ballistic-missile program, and pledged their steadfast support for Israel—thus encouraging both Trump and Netanyahu to proceed with their offensive against Iran.

This points to another of the chief concerns of the European imperialists, which underscores that their

intentions are no less belligerent. Along with the Democratic Party and much of the US military-intelligence apparatus, they have been arguing that the best strategy for bringing Iran to heel, and integrating that campaign with NATO’s military-strategic offensive against Russia, is to concentrate on prosecuting the war for regime change in Syria. As was frankly admitted by political leaders and the capitalist media in the run-up to last month’s US-French-British airstrikes on Syria, this alternate imperialist strategy could rapidly result in direct military clashes between US and Russian forces, with all that entails.

Washington’s trashing of the nuclear deal constitutes an immense crisis and devastating exposure of Iran’s bourgeois nationalist regime. Terrified of the growing class contradictions in Iran, the Islamic Republic’s bourgeois-clerical regime placed its hopes in a rapprochement with US imperialism and Barack Obama’s phony promises of a new US Mideast foreign policy. No matter that it was under Obama that the US attacked Libya, launched a similar regime-change operation in Syria and supported the military in restoring its bloody grip over Egypt.

Since Trump, an avowed opponent of the Iran deal from its inception, came to office, Teheran has desperately appealed to the Europeans to shield them from America’s wrath. Meanwhile, in line with these efforts to ingratiate itself with the imperialists and woo investment, the Iranian bourgeoisie has pressed forward with its anti-working-class austerity policies.

In response to Trump’s announcement, Iranian President Hassan Rouhani and the Europeans announced that they intend to stay in the nuclear deal. In doing so, Rouhani is clutching at straws.



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