

Iran's Nuclear Deal Triggers Spin War

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Global Research, November 27, 2013

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Iran's nuclear deal with the P5+1 group of world powers in Geneva has triggered a spin war which will last for the next 6 months, as many of the parties involved will pursue their own business interests in this situation, journalist Pepe Escobar told RT.

RT: As we see, US Secretary of State John Kerry and Iran's Foreign Minister Mohammed Zarif came out of the talks with different views. Why's there such diversity in the interpretation of the deal?

Pepe Escobar: Because the spin war started at 3am in Geneva. It's going to go on for another six months, until May 2014, that's the duration of this "first step" deal.

[It's] very important: Kerry had to say [this] so that he could appease the Israel lobby, the US Congress and the Wahhabi petrodollar lobby in the US, not to mention some neocons in the US as well, [who are] still very powerful.

In Iran it's different. They are saying, "We still have our right to enrich uranium," and this is correct, because they will keep enriching uranium to 5 percent for the next six months, [while] 20 percent [enrichment] is frozen. They will discuss... the next deal, which will be the definitive deal, starting from May 2014.

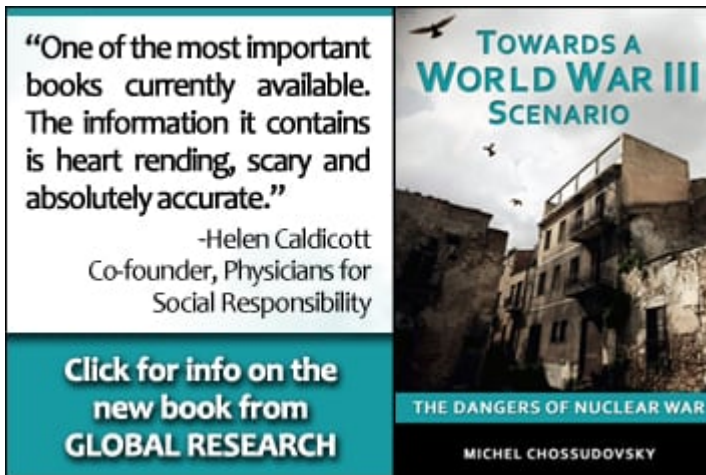
And all the 20 percent enriched uranium that they have is going to be diluted, so it cannot be used later on for weapons-grade material.

RT: As you've said, the spin war has started, but how that would affect the implementation of the deal now and six months down the road? Who will eventually benefit from it, if the two sides have such diverse opinions? Won't it stall one day at some point?

PE: No, we have to follow the letter of the agreement. This means enrichment until 5 percent OK, no further enrichment till 20 percent for the next six months, no new centrifuges. If Iran follows this - they are abiding by the deal, no problem.

The thing is, if among these IAEA inspectors [who] should be in Iran practically on a daily basis from now on, if you had the usual Eiffel traders [Parisian residents who fraudulently "sell" the Eiffel Tower to unsuspecting visitors - RT] who start spinning something else.

I'm sure Iran won't break their promises, it's in their own interest not to break any promise.



RT: It's emerged that Washington was engaged in secret talks with Iran long before the Geneva agreement, and even their closest allies were unaware. What do you make of this?

PE: Look, this is an extremely complex negotiation. Can you imagine that you have sherpas going to Geneva a month or three weeks ago, and hammering out the final deal so [that] we have foreign ministers [who] can sign it? It's impossible. Sherpas usually start such things months in advance and obviously we had America's sherpas, Iranian sherpas and Russian sherpas, these are the ones that count. Britain and France are spectators; they don't count at all.

France counts [regarding] the 20 percent [enriched uranium], because they have cornered the market in medical isotopes. If Iran reaches 20 percent enrichment and starts selling their own medical isotopes cheaper, especially to the developing world, it's not a good deal for France. So for the moment France is protecting its business interests.

RT: Let's turn to America's assessment of the situation, specifically what President Obama said. Looking at the Geneva deal, he said this is just a first step to reach a comprehensive solution in the future. What in your opinion would make Washington consider a full agreement?

PE: Obama is correct when he said, "This is the first step." But, very important, the way he said it was very condescending, in fact even insulting, to Iran. He said nothing about Iranians' role in the deal, mentioning only the role of absurd sanctions, which should be dismantled, because most of the sanctions bypass the UN, like Russia's Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov has been saying for months in fact.

Very important, for the next few months: follow the money. The Americans say they are going to unfreeze some of the Iranian money, perhaps \$32 billion or even more. There is \$10 billion in European banks. These are not going to be unfrozen. If the US unfreezes \$4 to \$5 billion – Obama can do it by executive order, bypassing the US Congress.

RT: John Kerry believes the sanctions have done their job and were quite helpful in sealing this deal. To what extent do you agree with this?

PE: In fact, it is the Iranian population that is paying the price of the sanctions; the Iranian government has found ways to bypass it. They're selling, or bartering or trading energy, especially with their Asian customers. You know how much money Iran has [with] mostly Asian clients, China, Japan, Turkey and South Korea? \$50 billion, [yet] they still cannot bring that money to Iran, so they have to buy products from these countries. So this is something

that must be hammered out in the next agreement.

For the moment we have a breakthrough – it's going to last for six months. There will be all sorts of interests that will try to bombard this deal; I'm saying especially about Wahhabi petrodollar monarchy interests and the Israeli lobby as well.

But for the moment we have diplomacy in action, something that we haven't seen, especially between Iran and the US, for 34 years. This is the major breakthrough at the moment. But we have to be vigilant.

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