

Persian Peril: Brinkmanship in the Post-INF Treaty Era

A conversation with Scott Ritter and Bruce Gagnon

By [Michael Welch](#), [Scott Ritter](#), and [Bruce Gagnon](#)

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Region: [Middle East & North Africa](#), [Russia and FSU](#), [USA](#)

Theme: [GLOBAL RESEARCH NEWS HOUR](#), [Intelligence](#), [Media Disinformation](#), [Military Militarization and WMD](#), [US NATO War Agenda](#)

“By sending this signal of massive retaliation, I think Iran may have stopped an American attack on Natanz (nuclear facility) in July, because the United States now knows that any attack against Iran cannot be contained. It will not be a limited action. It will be massive retaliation leading to a full-out war that the United States is neither prepared to fight nor has the capacity to fight at this time.” -Scott Ritter (From this week’s interview.)

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Diplomats from China, Russia, Great Britain, Germany and France met with their Iranian counterparts on Friday June 28th in an urgent attempt to steer the Islamic Republic away from breaching conditions of the JCPOA agreement. [1]

According to Tehran, the Islamic Republic has now amassed more enriched uranium than is allowed under the 2015 nuclear deal, and is on a course to breach another condition relating to the purity of the enriched uranium by early July. [2]

This comes a week after [Iran shot down a U.S. drone](#). U.S. President Trump [refrained from launching an attack on Iran](#), but nevertheless threatened in a Tuesday tweet that “any attack by Iran on anything American will be met with great and overwhelming force.”

Iran leadership doesn’t understand the words “nice” or “compassion,” they never have. Sadly, the thing they do understand is Strength and Power, and the USA is by far the most powerful Military Force in the world, with 1.5 Trillion Dollars invested over the last two years alone..

— Donald J. Trump (@realDonaldTrump) [June 25, 2019](#)

This apparent defiance is coming in the face of U.S. belligerence and a ‘[maximum pressure](#)’ campaign, designed apparently to convince the Iranian government to return to the

bargaining table and agree to a better nuclear deal than the one arrived at under his predecessor President Obama. In the meantime, the Trump administration is resolute in its determination to [sanction any country, without exemption](#), that purchases oil from Iran.

On Friday June 28th, the U.S. AIR Force Central Command (CENTCOM) [confirmed the deployment](#) of F-22 stealth fighters to the al-Udeid airbase in Qatar, intended to “defend American forces and interests” in the region.

The backdrop of these developments is the spectre of a more relaxed attitude toward the use of nuclear weapons. In February of this year, the U.S. [announced](#) its abandonment of the three decade old Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty (INF) signed at the height of the Cold War in order to eliminate all ground-launched conventional and nuclear-armed cruise missiles with ranges of between 1,000 and 5,500 kilometers.

In late January of this year, the Bulletin of Atomic Scientists [unveiled its Doomsday Clock](#) revealing a time of two minutes to midnight. Not since the Soviets detonated a hydrogen bomb in 1953 has the world come so close to the unthinkable in the estimation of the organization.

In a climate of hostile rhetoric and economic uncertainty, what is likely to happen when the irresistible force that is the United States war machine, comes in contact with the immovable object that is Iran? This is the question at the core of this week’s Global Research News Hour radio program.

Two guests, Scott Ritter and Bruce Gagnon discuss the current twists and turns in America’s foreign and diplomatic postures in Iran and beyond, as well as the various factors shaping its policy.

Scott Ritter is a former US Marine Intelligence Officer and former Chief UN Weapons Inspector in Iraq. In 1987 Ritter was hand-picked to serve with the On Site Inspection Agency, where he was responsible for carrying out the provisions of the Intermediate range Nuclear Forces or (INF) Treaty. In 2002, he was outspoken against the Bush Administration’s case for a military assault on Iraq. A regular contributor to [The American Conservative](#) and [Truth Dig](#) among other online publications, he is also the author of nine books including his most recent, [Dealbreaker: Donald Trump and the Unmaking of the Iran Nuclear Deal \(2018\)](#) from Clarity Press.

Bruce Gagnon has a 3 decade long history of involvement in the peace movement and active resistance to the militarization of and use of nuclear weapons in outer space. A member of the group Veterans for Peace, he co-founded the Global Network Against Weapons and Nuclear Power in Space in 1992 in which he serves as secretary/Coordinator. He has contributed to a number of publications including [CounterPunch](#), [Z Magazine](#), [Space News](#), [National Catholic Reporter](#), Global Research, Asia Times, Le Monde Diplomatique, and [Canadian Dimension](#). He also has a blog and has produced educational videos all of which appear at his group’s site [space4peace.org](#).

(Global Research News Hour Episode 266)

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[Port Perry Radio](#) in Port Perry, Ontario –1 Thursdays at 1pm ET

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It is also available on 93.9 FM cable in the communities of SFU, Burnaby, New Westminister, Coquitlam, Port Coquitlam, Port Moody, Surrey and Delta, in British Columbia, Canada. – Tune in at its new time – Wednesdays at 4pm PT.

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[CORTES COMMUNITY RADIO CKTZ 89.5](#) out of Manson's Landing, B.C airs the show Tuesday mornings at 10am Pacific time.

[Cowichan Valley Community Radio CICV 98.7 FM](#) serving the [Cowichan Lake](#) area of Vancouver Island, BC airs the program Thursdays at 6am pacific time.

Campus and community radio [CFMH 107.3fm](#) in Saint John, N.B. airs the Global Research News Hour Fridays at 10am.

Caper Radio CJBW 107.3FM in Sydney, [Cape Breton](#), Nova Scotia airs the Global Research News Hour starting Wednesday Morning from 8:00 to 9:00am. Find more details at [www.caperradio.ca](#)

RIOT RADIO, the visual radio station based out of [Durham College](#) in Oshawa, Ontario has begun airing the Global Research News Hour on an occasional basis. Tune in at [dcstudentsinc.ca/services/riot-radio/](#)

Radio Fanshawe: [Fanshawe's 106.9 The X \(CIXX-FM\)](#) out of London, Ontario airs the Global Research News Hour Sundays at 6am with an encore at 3pm.

Los Angeles, California based [Thepowerofvoices.com](#) airs the Global Research News Hour every Monday from 6-7pm Pacific time.

Notes:

1. [John Irish](#), [Francois Murphy](#) (June 28, 2019), 'Iran says progress at last-ditch nuclear deal talks 'not enough' , Reuters; <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-iran-nuclear-talks-idUSKCN1TT16V>
2. ibid

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